



IN THE TABLOID

**BRIDGET JONES:  
HER POLITICAL  
CONFESSIONS**

IN THE TABLOID: FASHION

**HOW TO MAKE  
SUMMER  
SHEER BLISS**

IN THE TABLOID

**THOMAS  
PYNCHON  
AT SIXTY**

## The Old Lady breaks free



The Bank opened on July 27, 1894 with £1.2m capital to finance William III's war with France. The idea came from a Scotsman.

It began business in a single rented room in the Mercers' Hall in the City of London, with a staff of 19. It moved to Threadneedle Street in 1734.

The name 'The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street' is thought to originate from a wooden sign of Britannia displayed outside the bank in the 1670s. The image was quickly picked up by cartoonists like Gillray.

The first Governor was Sir John Houblon, whose portrait now appears on a commemorative £50 note, and whose livery - red waistcoat and pink coats - is still worn by the Bank's doormen and messengers.

The Bank was nationalised by Labour in 1945. It was given real freedom yesterday by another Scotsman.

The way it was: "Political ravishment" by James Gillray, etched exactly 200 years ago, shows the Bank under attack from Pitt the Younger. Many politicians did likewise.



Anthony Bevins  
Political Editor  
Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

Gordon Brown yesterday freed the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, the Bank of England, from effective political control in the most dramatic possible illustration of the new Labour Government's cracking pace.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was the most radical action that had been taken on the Bank in 300 years.

Loan rates were increased by a quarter-point to 6.25 per cent after Mr Brown's first and last monetary meeting with Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England.

Some of the biggest lenders, including the Halifax and Cheltenham and Gloucester, raised mortgage rates immediately, adding £13 a month to the cost of a typical £50,000 loan.

Most commentators expect further increases in the next few months, with the decision resting fully with the Bank from now on.

On the first full day of the new administration after the Bank Holiday weekend, the Chancellor brought forward his regular meeting with Mr George and agreed the interest rate rise and the Bank's freedom from Treasury control before announcing the decisions at an 11am press conference.

With Tony Blair set to address the first televised meeting of the new 419-strong Parliamentary Labour Party this morning, amid a demand that MPs maintain the tight discipline which won them their seats, a deluge of decisions poured out of Whitehall departments. On top of the Chancellor's announcement of the department of David Blunkett the Secretary of State for Education signalled action to dismantle the nursery voucher scheme. Home Secretary Jack Straw ordered an audit of prisons. Agriculture Minister

Jack Cunningham made the first move towards creating a Food Agency and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said a conference would be held on Bank of England holdings of Nazi gold.

While Mr Brown's announcement of Bank freedom united Labour MPs from left and right of the party, Tory divisions continued. Former Chancellor Norman Lamont congratulated Mr Brown on a move that was "thoroughly to

be welcomed", while former Home Secretary and Tory leadership contender Michael Howard deplored it. The move got a rapturous welcome in the financial markets, which sent shares soaring to a new record.

Mr Brown told *The Independent* it was the Government's responsibility to set the economic framework, monetary policy and the inflation target. But he added: "What has bedevilled the British economy is that we have had repeated cycles of

boom and bust - stop-go economics that have been responsible for a great deal of instability that has bedevilled businesses and families.

"I am now putting in place, however, what I believe is a long-term framework that will demand most confidence, that will give credibility to monetary policy decisions and will also enhance the reputation of the Government and the Bank of England for getting the decisions right," Mr Brown insisted.

The Government would reduce Value-Added Tax on domestic fuel and heating bills to 5 per cent in the July Budget and hinted at making a start on a new 10p tax band.

The main aim of the press conference was to spell out arrangements for a new monetary policy committee at the Bank of England to set rates by majority vote.

Appointments to the committee will be announced soon. A second deputy governor will

be appointed after the appropriate legislation has been passed. The committee will answer to the Bank's Court, its board of directors, which will be altered to reflect a broader range of interests. The Bank also will be answerable to MPs on the Treasury Select Committee.

Gavin Davies, chief economist at Goldman Sachs, seen as front-runner to succeed Mr George, said: "This is the ideal form of independence. It is

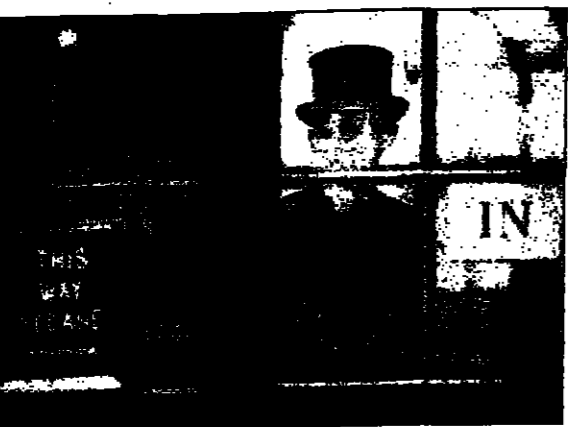
about as far as you would want to go in our political system."

The City broadly welcomed the interest rate rise and the Bank's independence, with slight reservations about the risk of political appointments to the new committee. The reaction from industry was more

cautious. The CBI welcomed the Bank's independence but said it was looking for tax increases in the first Budget.

The Chancellor admitted yesterday that the strength of the pound created a dilemma, but said delivering low inflation was in industry's interest.

## Bad news for home owners? Not longer term



Independence day at the bank Photograph: Tom Flitton

Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

Gordon Brown's surprise present of its independence to the Bank of England looks, on the face of it, like good news for traders in the City of London and bad news for home-owners. A higher level of interest rates means more expensive mortgages, and an independent Bank is likely to increase rates several times more before it is satisfied that inflation is on target.

But this is one of those moments where to focus on the short-term cost ignores very real long-term gains. Yesterday there was already some sign of these in the fact that the long-term interest rates the Government has to pay on its own debt had fallen sharply. That means an immediate saving for the taxpayer.

er, with debt interest the fifth biggest component of government spending.

The real benefit, and the one that makes yesterday's announcement a turning point in the history of British economic policy, is the fact that inflation is lower and growth more stable when central banks, and not politicians, set interest rate policy. If we truly want to end the pattern of boom and bust, this is one of the most effective means of achieving it.

For all Ken Clarke's improvements to the policy machinery, Britain still has one of the most volatile economies, and one of the highest inflation rates, in the industrialised world. There is little doubt that this is in large part due to a greater proneness to using both levers of economic policy, monetary and fiscal, for political ends.

Giving the Bank its independence has

made it all but impossible for politicians to manipulate interest rates in a narrow, short-termist way in future. It is unthinkable in practice that a future Chancellor would be able to reverse Mr Brown's decision. This will mean, over the course of many years, lower and more stable interest rates, and lower mortgage costs.

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said the Chancellor's prudence would extend to setting taxes and spending for the long-term. "I would hope the commitment to the responsible policy he has shown today on the money policy side, I would hope that will carry over into the fiscal side too," he said in central banker-speak. Mr Brown has sent the strongest possible signal of his long-termism. It is worth £10 a month on the mortgage for now for the likely savings later.

## Howard's champagne pact goes flat

Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

The champagne flowed, and Michael Howard toasted the deal he thought he had struck with William Hague to form a dream ticket for the leadership of the Conservative Party.

Mr Hague had agreed at 11 o'clock on Monday night, over drinks in Mr Howard's grace and favour flat in Belgrave, that he would be the deputy leader and chairman of the party, giving Mr Howard an unstoppable run at the leadership.

The celebratory drinks were

shared with Mr Howard's wife, Sandra, Mr Hague's girlfriend, Fiona Jenkins, 28, and Sir Michael Spicer, Mr Howard's campaign manager.

But the champagne feeling turned flat at 8am yesterday when Mr Hague, 36, rang the former Home Secretary to tell him that, having slept on the idea, he had second thoughts - he was running for the leadership, and the deal was off.

Mr Howard was furious, but put a brave face on it yesterday, as he announced his intention to run for the leadership without Mr Hague's support.

After confirming Mr Hague had had second thoughts, Mr Howard said he did not rule out Mr Hague joining his shadow Cabinet if he was elected leader.

"I have the highest opinion of Mr Hague," he said. "I certainly intend that he should play a part in the team."

He added that there could also be places for two of his declared rivals for the job - Kenneth Clarke and John Redwood, who also launched his campaign yesterday.

Mr Howard said that it would be "silly" to pretend that he and Mr Clarke agreed on everything

but he said they had been friends for 37 years and there were a large number of issues on which they were agreed.

The champagne supper, like a party that got out of hand, left both camps with a bad hang-over, and embarrassment on all sides. The opposing Lilley and Redwood camps could not hide their glee at the set-back for both Mr Howard and Mr Hague. "It just shows that they still couldn't organise a p\*\*\*-up if they tried," said one Redwood campaign supporter.

There had been intensive talks over the telephone for the

past three days, about Mr Hague throwing his support behind Mr Howard.

"It was agreed over the telephone that William would be the deputy leader and chairman of the party. They were really only agreeing the details of the campaign. The meeting lasted about an hour and they broke out the champagne to celebrate. It was obviously a winning ticket."

"William rang Michael early this morning to say it was off," said one of Mr Howard's supporters. "The whole thing is unfortunate."

Redwood quest, page 6

Whatever you save for, an Abbey National Instant Saver Account makes it easy. The Account offers flexibility to save in a way that suits you. With tiered rates of interest you can watch your savings grow, plus instant access to your money 24 hours a day\*. To find out more, call into your local branch.



SAVINGS

\*Provided you have an Abbeylink card. Subject to daily withdrawal limits. Abbey National and the Umbrella logo are trademarks of Abbey National plc, Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL. 0171 612 4000



**THE BROADSHEET**  
Business & City ... 20-22  
Comment ... 15-17  
Foreign News ... 11-14  
Gazette ... 18

Home News ... 2-10  
Law report ... 18  
Leading article ... 15  
Letters ... 15  
Obituaries ... 18

Sports ... 24-28  
Shares ... 23  
THE TABLOID  
Arts ... 67

Bridget Jones ... 3  
Fashion ... 8,9  
Money ... 12-15  
TV & Radio ... 27,28  
Weather ... 26

## news

## significant shorts

## Pilot killed on photography mission in Scotland

A light aircraft on a photographic assignment crashed into a field yesterday, killing the pilot. The white twin-seater Cessna 152 took off from Cumbernauld airport, 10 miles north of Glasgow, at around 8.30am and was heading for Denny, near Falkirk, when the accident happened. It ploughed into a field yards from the B818 road two miles from Denny about 15 minutes later. Central Scotland Police confirmed that the pilot had died and efforts were being made to identify the pilot.

## Pet bakery rouses lethal fears

The RSPCA is warning pet-lovers about the dangers of killing their pets with kindness after the launch of Britain's first dog bakery selling gourmet biscuits and birthday cakes. PetMart has opened at Europe's largest pet superstore in Raynes Park, London. Those wanting to treat their pets can choose from a pack of eight minipupcakes priced at £3.60 to a two-tiered seven-inch sponge cake decorated with bones and paw prints for £15.98. But an RSPCA spokesman said: "Dogs should not be stuffed with cakes."

## 1066 and all that goes electronic

The Public Record Office, which houses paperwork dating back to the Domesday Book of 1066, will move into the modern world this week when it goes electronic. But only new documents will be stored on the PRO's new computer system. About 900 years of historical documents will remain tucked away in the estimated 90-miles of shelves within the depths of the PRO at Ruskin Avenue, Richmond, London. When the EROS, Electronic records from Office Systems, becomes available to the public on Friday, the only record on offer via computer will be part of Lord Nolan's report, from the Committee on Standards of Conduct in Public Life.

## Essex firefighters strike again

Firefighters were last night launching their seventh strike in a long-running dispute over spending cuts. Around 1,000 members of the Fire Brigades Union in Essex were walking out at 1800 hours for the latest 24 hour strike in protest at £1.5m-worth of cuts.

## Conran wins sole rights to Zinc



The right to own a bar called Zinc was won by Sir Terence Conran, the restaurateur, yesterday. Sir Terence beat off rival Vince Power, who owns the Mean Fiddler chain of concert venues.

The design guru had resorted to legal action after claiming Mr Power's new bar, Zn, formerly known as Zinchar, infringed his trade mark Zinc. The mark was registered in Sir Terence in June 1995. But in December last year, Mr Power opened a bar in Kilburn High Road, London, called Zinchar.

## Raving Monster's mother dies

Annie Sutch, mother of Screaming Lord Sutch the founder of the Monster Raving Loony Party, has died aged 80, her family said. Mrs Sutch, who encouraged her only son to stand for Parliament and helped put together his colourful costumes, died at London's Northwick Park Hospital last week.

## Police shock over officer's suicide

A promising young police officer, tipped by colleagues to reach the top of his profession, has committed suicide. Fellow officers discovered the body of Detective Chief Inspector David Bass, 33, at his East London home on Sunday evening. Det Ch Insp Bass, who was based at Limehouse Police Station was due to be promoted to Superintendent, making him one of the youngest in Britain to hold that rank.

A colleague said: "David was a very impressive young man who'd probably have ended up as the youngest chief constable in the country. Everyone is very upset."

Kim Sengupta

## people



Margaret Atwood: Novel tells story of notorious murderer (Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid)

## American authors writ large in Orange order of merit

Two of the world's most celebrated female novelists are on the shortlist for the £30,000 Orange Prize for fiction, open only to women writers.

The American E. Annie Proulx, winner of the 1993 Pulitzer Prize, and the Canadian Margaret Atwood, three times shortlisted for the Booker Prize, are among the six writers competing for the prize, set up last year to raise the profile of fiction by female writers.

Ms Proulx, who published her first novel in 1991 at the age of 56 and won the Pulitzer Prize for *The Shipping News*, is included for *Accordion Crimes*, a tale of immigrant life in 20th-century America, constructed around the journey of an accordion and those who own it.

Margaret Atwood's novel *Alias Grace* is based on the true story of one of 19th-century Canada's most enigmatic and notorious characters, murderer Grace Marks. It was favourite for last year's Booker Prize, but lost out to Graham Swift's *Last Orders*.

The other novels in the running for the prize, which will be awarded in June, are: *One by One in the Darkness* by Delia Madden; *Was Amelia Earhart* by Jane

Mendelsohn; *Fugitive Pieces* by Anne Michaels, and *Hen's Teeth* by Manda Scott. Three of the four are first novels.

In an extension to the usual format of literary awards, the shortlisted authors will read from their books at a public reading, two nights before the prize-giving, and there will be an Orange web site for readers to give their opinions on the books.

A spokeswoman for the prize organisers said last night: "It's true that the prize was set up to raise the profile of women novelists. But it doesn't matter at all if there are high-profile and high-selling authors on the shortlist, as the prize will bring them to the attention of even more readers."

Kate Mosse, administrator of the prize, commented: "Our aim was always to create a prize for readers and bring a breath of fresh air to the established literary landscape. I'm particularly excited at the international flavour of this year's shortlist and I am delighted that we have been able to extend our range of debates and live readings."

David Lister

## Hamilton's wife tells of stress caused by defeat

Christine Hamilton (right), wife of former MP Neil Hamilton, yesterday admitted that the stress of his defeat had left her depressed and sleepless, and that she had lost a stone-and-a-half in weight.

The couple both lost their jobs when "anti-sleaze" candidate Martin Bell took Mr Hamilton's Tatton seat in the general election. Mrs Hamilton was her husband's secretary and had worked in Parliament for 27 years.

In a live appearance on BBC1's *Kilroy* discussion programme, 47-year-old Mrs Hamilton said: "Of course, I am depressed but I am also very optimistic. We have just got to pick ourselves up. We are absolutely exhausted."

"It is when you wake up in the middle of the night that it is worst. Nature wakes you in the middle of the night, and then I can't get back to sleep. I have lost a stone-and-a-half over the last six months. We have had a hell of a time for months."

Mr Hamilton, 48, compared the loss of his seat to the death of someone close. "It is akin to a bereavement. I feel as though I have been bereaved in a sense, because my career is something I've wanted to do since the age of 12 or 13."



The Hamiltons said they felt angry rather than ashamed and were looking forward to being exonerated by the publication of the Downey report into sleaze.

The couple won a generally sympathetic hearing from the studio audience. But some suggested that Mr Hamilton would find the experience of claiming benefits under the rules introduced by the old Tory government a rude shock.

One woman told the ex-MP, who said he had not yet signed on: "You haven't been into a JobCentre under the Job Seekers' Allowance? You don't even know you're born yet."

## College welcomes graduate, aged 103

A 103-year-old woman is set to become the oldest person to receive a degree certificate from Cambridge University.

Molly Maxwell will collect the award at a special ceremony on her 104th birthday, on Tuesday - 80 years after she finished her studies at Cambridge.

Mrs Maxwell, who now lives in a nursing home in Golders Green, north London, began studying modern languages at Newnham College in 1914.

She completed her studies in 1917 and left with an "honours" certificate - women were not allowed to receive degrees and become members of the university until 1948.

Now the university has said women who completed degree courses prior to 1948 can be given certificates. And Mrs Green has asked if she can be given her just reward at long last.

"She asked the nursing staff to get in touch with us and we were delighted to help," said a Cambridge University spokesman.

"She completed the degree course and the certificate is really just a formality."

"She will certainly be the oldest person to receive a degree certificate from us."

## briefing

## COUNTRYSIDE

## Pesticides decimating farmland bird population

"Not so much a Dawn Chorus, more a barber's shop quarter." The description yesterday by broadcaster and naturalist Julian Pettifer of the death of bird song outside his Berkshire home reinforced the findings of a report linking pesticide use and the decline in numbers of farmland birds.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds wants the new Government to encourage industry to develop pest-specific chemicals and to tax pesticides according to their impact on wildlife.

With insects and seed-bearing weeds killed off, the chicks of several species are being starved to death, suggested the report by two Government advisory bodies, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and English Nature, and the RSPB.

Underlining what many ornithologists have long suspected, the report identified 11 endangered species, including skylark (down 58 per cent in 25 years), lapwing (down 62 per cent) and song thrush (down 73 per cent).

Stephen Goodwin



## INTERNET

## Royal web site proves popular

The official royal website has been visited 12.5 million times in its first two months on the Internet, Buckingham Palace disclosed yesterday. The 165-page site, launched by the Queen on 6 March, was accessed 1 million times in the first 24 hours.

And now the site has been extended, with a further 85 pages of royal history, profiles and speeches, illustrated by pictures from the Royal Collection. Computer users around the world, who are connected to the Internet, can now access the history of the British crown, for the price of a local telephone call.

National curriculum history advisers have collaborated with the Palace to write the text of the pages, covering the Anglo-Saxon kings to George VI. In addition, users can access a rare letter written by George III in the 1780s on the loss of America, and Edward VIII's abdication speech of December 11, 1936.

The web site address is: <http://www.royal.gov.uk>

## NATURE

## Prickly outlook for hedgehogs

The perils of life as a hedgehog were highlighted yesterday by a study which showed that up to 75 per cent face an early death - largely because of the hazards of the human environment.

Of 12 released into the wild in Surrey, only three were definitely still alive 15 weeks later, the research found. The animals dispersed widely - over distances up to 3km.

Six died in accidents, including three hit by cars, while one, having done well for 71 days, drowned in a steep-sided garden pond. One became the unlucky victim of a badger.

Dr Nigel Reeve, a lecturer and researcher at Roehampton Institute, London, who carried out the study, wrote in *Nature Line*, the magazine of Surrey Wildlife Trust: "We must be very concerned that a hedgehog's life seems to be so dangerous. Of seven recorded deaths, only one was the result of a failure to thrive and all other mortality was accidental."

## TRANSPORT

## Women afraid to travel by train

Women should be free from fear when travelling by train and more should be done to make journeys safer for them, according to a report published yesterday. Women wanted to know that help was at hand from well-trained and visible staff, the report added.

Poor carriage layout, doors and windows not opening, and badly designed overhead racks were just some of the problems cited.

The report - by the south-east England section of the working women's group Soroptimist International - calls for measures to make the communication cord easier to reach on certain trains, emergency help points on every station, better public information and better carriage design.

## TECHNOLOGY

## Microchip giant moves forward

The giant microchip manufacturer Intel has launched its next generation computer processor, the Pentium II. The new chip has been designed to make best use of "visual computing", a step forward in business computer use which Intel expects to be widely used in the next few years.

Graphics and pictures are expected to become more important in the way people present information, with 3-D graphs replacing spreadsheets full of numbers. As systems become more visual and reliant on graphics, existing computers will work slower because they cannot cope with the graphical content.

Intel claims its new microchip anticipates these changes. It will be installed on new computers as from now, and although it will add to their cost, one company executive said the extra money was an "investment".

## THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

Australia	£34.00	Norway	£15.00
Belgium	£19.00	Italy	£14.00
Canada	£20.00	Madagascar	£20.00
Cyprus	£12.00	Malta	£3.00
Denmark	£18.00	Netherlands	£12.00
East Asia	£18.00	Portugal	£12.00
France	£14.00	Spain	£12.00
Germany	£14.00	Sweden	£12.00
Greece	£14.00	Switzerland	£14.00
Luxembourg	£14.00	USA	£13.00

OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTIONS  
 Air Mail, 13 weeks Europe £110.75; Zone 1, Middle East, America, Africa and India £184.00; Zone 2, Far East and Australasia £206.70. To order, please send cheque payable to Independent Newspapers Media Services Ltd at 42 Millbank, London E14 6DF or telephone 0272-536 8288. Credit cards welcome.  
 BACK ISSUES  
 Back issues of the Independent are available from: Harrow Newspapers, telephone 01895 840370.

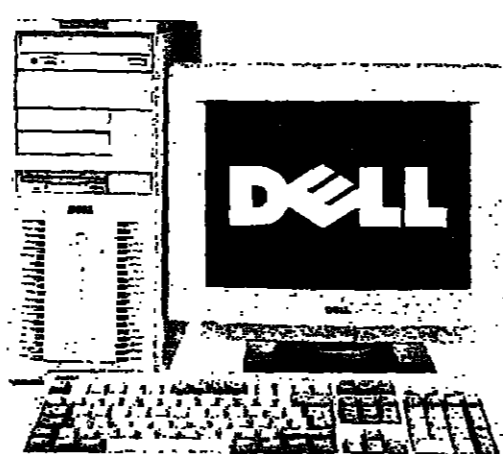


**NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING**  
 Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

## Even the price is at the cutting edge.

- DELL DIMENSION™ XPS H233
- INTEL PENTIUM® II PROCESSOR 233MHz
- 32Mb EDO RAM
- 512Kb CACHE
- 3.2Gb EIDE HARD DRIVE
- MATRIX MILLENNIUM 64-BIT PCI GRAPHICS CARD WITH 4Mb VRAM
- HIGH PERFORMANCE ULTRASCAN™ 15" COLOUR SVGA MONITOR (13.75" VIEWABLE AREA)
- 12-16 SPEED CD-ROM DRIVE
- INTEGRATED 16-BIT SOUND (SPEAKERS OPTIONAL)
- MID-SIZED TOWER CHASSIS
- WINDOWS 95 & MICROSOFT OFFICE 97 (SBE)

**£1,599 (£1,908.20)**  
 incl. delivery & VAT



Once again, Dell puts the future within your reach - the new Pentium® II Processor just launched by Intel is now available from Dell. For only £1,599 (£1,908.20 inc. del. and VAT) we bring you the highly advanced Dell Dimension™ XPS H233. It gives you an unbelievably fast 233MHz processor, and a high performance Dell Ultrascan™ 15" monitor (13.75" viewable area). And the system comes pre-loaded with Microsoft® Office 97 (SBE) so it's ready to run. The cutting edge? If you're sharp you'll call 01344 724652 and talk to the world's largest direct PC manufacturer\* today.

## Upgrade Options

- Add an Iomega Zip Drive with 3x100Mb cartridges £99 (£116.33 inc.VAT)
- Add an internal US Robotics 33.6 Modem £99 (£116.33 inc.VAT)
- Add ACS290 premium speakers £80 (£94 inc.VAT)

## Special price

- £99 (£116.33 inc.VAT)
- £99 (£116.33 inc.VAT)
- £80 (£94 inc.VAT)

**DELL**

TALK DIRECT TO THE NUMBER ONE.  
**01344 724652**

Between 8am and 8pm weekdays, 10am to 4pm Sat.

Visit our website: [www.dell.com/uk](http://www.dell.com/uk)

Dell and the Dell logo are registered trademarks, and Dell Dimension and Ultrascan are trademarks of Dell Computer Corporation. The Intel Inside logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and MMX is a trademark of Intel Corporation. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks and Office 97 is a trademark of the Microsoft Corporation. Delivery at £25 (£29.12 incl VAT) per system. Finance is available subject to status. Full details available on request. Prices correct at date of publication. The photographed product may not always match the specification in this advert. Prices quoted refer to specific configurations only. The prices listed reflect the information available at the time of going to press. Prices change frequently. All prices and specifications are subject to change without prior notice or obligation. Offer supplied with Windows 95 Dell mouse and keyboard included. Dell Computer Corporation Ltd, Millbank House, Western Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1LD. Offer available for a limited period only. Dell terms and conditions of sales and service apply.

# BBC Too masculine BBC Too middle-class BBC Too middle-aged

What Channel 4's new chief executive had to say about his former bosses

Paul McCann  
Media Correspondent

The BBC was accused of talking in a voice that is too middle-aged, too masculine and too southern yesterday by the man who was running its television channels until last Friday.

Michael Jackson, the new chief executive of Channel 4 and former director of television and controller of BBC 1, made the comments as Channel 4 was showing him off to the press at its London headquarters.

Mr Jackson, who will take over from Michael Grade on 1 June, told journalists: "One of the areas that BBC TV is weak in is talking to women as opposed to men, talking to young people and talking to people outside the South-east of England."

He contrasted this with what he thought were Channel 4's strengths: "They're to do with the relationship with an audience that trusts Channel 4 which knows that the channel is on its side."

A BBC spokesman later said that he was puzzled by Mr Jackson's comments.

He added: "BBC 1 has the most balanced audience of any British broadcaster. BBC2, having trounced Channel 4 over the last three years is now seeking to reinforce its strengths by appealing more to women and young people."

But the lobbying group Women in Film and Television welcomed Mr Jackson's comments. "We're delighted that at his maiden press conference he has recognised the importance of a commitment to women as an audience and we look forward to an increased profile for women on all channels," a spokeswoman said.

"It is not that there are never any programmes about women or about life north of Watford," said Tessa Perkins, principal lecturer in media at Sheffield Hallam University. "It is the fact that the way they are dealt with is as if they are a departure from the normal, male, southern world."

She added: "Channel 4 targets niche audiences directly, it is part of its remit. The BBC thinks of niche audiences not in terms of women, youth or regions, but in terms of the *Clothes Show*, the *Food and Drink Programme* or *Gardener's World*. Minorities are more like hobbyists."

Stephen Barnett, senior lecturer in communications at the University of Westminster, said that the BBC has its own research which confirms Mr Jackson's comments.

"It is perceived by the young as too middle-aged and by those in the regions as too London biased. Although I would argue that few see it as too male," Mr Barnett said. "The BBC has been aware of this for some time. And it is trying to change."



Sylvia Peters and her Baby

See page 12

Two ages of BBC women: The fifties presenter, Sylvia Peters, and Jill Dando, who is among the most widely favoured female broadcasters today

## Man who has date with destiny

Rob Brown  
Media Editor

When the founding chief executive of Channel 4, Jeremy Isaacs, handed over control of the station to Michael Grade, he issued this stern warning to the cigar-chomping impresario: "I am handing on to you a sacred trust. If you screw it up, if you betray it, I'll come back and throttle you."

As far as we know, Michael Grade has not been moved to issue a similar threat to Michael Jackson as he prepares to succeed him in what he and many others many others regard as the best job in British broadcasting.

Mr Jackson has seemed almost pre-destined for this position since he penned a thesis on the need for a radical innovative minority network as part of his BA in Media Studies at the Polytechnic of Central London (now the

University of Westminster). He was organiser of the Channel 4 Group which successfully lobbied for independent producers to play a key role in getting the station up and running.

Still only 39, Mr Jackson certainly gave the impression that his date with destiny had arrived yesterday when he was paraded before the press at Channel 4's headquarters near Victoria station, in central London.

"I have a huge attachment to Channel 4. I lobbied for it in its early days and I've watched it grow in strength and professionalism over the years," he confidently asserted, adding that his chief challenge would be to lead the station into the digital age and refresh and reinvigorate its programming remit.

Would that involve ditching programmes like *The Girlie Show*, which Mr Jackson, in his days in

charge of BBC2, once denounced as "sapping of originality" and "putting packaging before programming?"

Predictably, the new boss refused to discuss the merits or demerits of individual programmes before meeting the station's commissioning editors. "But my comments on *The Girlie Show* are a matter of public record," he added rather ominously.

He was also ultra-careful too asked about the future of its director of programming John Willis, whom he pipped for the chief executive post and with whom he once traded insults. Mr Willis branded him a "copycat criminal" after he had described Channel 4 as the "larger channel" because of its obsessive desire to appeal to upwardly mobile young males. But, all is fair in love and ratings wars, apparently. "I have a great respect for John," enthused Mr Jackson.



Michael Jackson: Wrote his thesis on radical innovation

## The virtual pet that provides companionship at a stroke

Glenda Cooper  
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

It is a pet which needs tender-loving care, constant feeding and strong discipline but it can fit in your pocket and doesn't need taking for walks.

This week sees the inevitable conclusion to our fast-moving, convenience-obsessed world. The cyberpet - a pocket-size chick which has taken Japan by

storm - will be launched tonight, and be available in the shops from next Monday.

Nearly 4 million "Tamagotchi", or "loveable eggs", have been sold in Japan to date and the manufacturer, Bandai, plans to sell 13 million over the next year.

The toy looks like an egg-shaped key ring but has a virtual reality chicken, represented as an animated line drawing on

a small LCD screen. It may be a virtual pet, but its makers say the creature requires as much attention from its owner as the average cat or dog.

Invested last year by a Japanese housewife, Aki Maeda, it imposes a hard regime on its owner, demanding to be virtually fed, virtually exercised and virtually amused by emitting a variety of electronic sounds. It even requires cleaning up after vir-

tually relieving itself. The creature begins life as a Bebitchi ("Babey"); the aim is to keep it alive for as long as possible, watching it grow through various stages of life right to maturity as an Oyajitchi ("Grampy"). A Tamagotchi lives for between 10 and 30 days. When its time is up the chicken icon transforms itself into an angel.

The toy - full name "Hyper Interactive Digital Pet Tam-

agotchi" - squeaks with delight when fed by the press of a button, or when its owner plays peek-a-boo with it. But it also warns the owner when it has defecated and when it is naughty another button can be used to provide discipline.

Although the toy was initially marketed at schoolgirls and working women, Japanese businessmen have been seen caring for their pets on the subway.

Bandai say that Tamagotchi crèches have been set up in Tokyo to let high-flyers leave their pets under supervision and bereavement counsellors are even being asked to help people through the unexpected passing of their pet.

Two books of advice on caring for the tamagotchi have already been published and the demand is creating a new breed of Tamagotchi criminals. The

pet will retail for £10.99 here - but in Japan Tamagotchis are selling for up to 10 times their value on the black market.

So seriously are cyberpets taken in Japan that in Tokyo earlier this year a helicopter, several patrol cars and a dozen police officers were involved in the pursuit of members of a gang who had made off with a Tamagotchi. The four thieves turned out to be 14 years-old.



Caption in here; two decks of

NATIONAL SAVINGS  
Investment Ideas

HELPING YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

I NOW HAVE A LUMP SUM WHICH I THINK IS BIG ENOUGH to give me a regular monthly income.  
What can National Savings offer?

Warren Mott  
BOURNEMOUTH



SONIA BREEZE  
National Savings

"NATIONAL SAVINGS INCOME BONDS WILL GIVE YOU AN ATTRACTIVE MONTHLY INCOME AT A VARIABLE RATE OF INTEREST. The other main features are:-

- the interest is paid gross
- the current rate is 6% pa for investments below £25,000
- there is a higher rate of 6.25% pa for larger investments
- you can invest any amount from £2,000 to £250,000
- your capital is 100% secure
- you can cash in your bonds at any time - without penalty - by giving 3 months' notice

Buy now using the application form in Your Money or for a full guide to our Income Bonds freecall 0500 500 000, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Unique Investment Opportunities from HM Treasury

1E11N7

## news

# Wreck may be world's oldest ship

Divers in Hampshire believe they may have found the oldest ship in the world. Carbon dating shows that wood found on the sea bed off Hayling Island, is 6,431 years old.

If, as divers who made the discovery hope, the wood turns out to come from a ship, it means they have found one of the oldest wrecks known - pre-dating the Pyramids and Stonehenge.

The wood has been discovered by members of the original diving team who located the Tudor warship *Mary Rose* which was lifted from the Solent off Southsea, also in Hampshire.

The team members have stuck together and, while investigating a Roman causeway in 1992, a short distance along the coast at Hayling, they found the pieces of wood, which they hoped might come from a Roman ship.

Initial analysis showed the wood was older than the 15th century and came from either a very cold or very hot climate, but only recently has carbon dating on the wood been carried out.

"The mind-boggling thing is it is not 2,000 years old as we were hoping, it turns out to be 6,431 years old," said a member of the team, Don Bullivant, 64, yesterday.

"We don't really know what we have got. It could be a clump of trees, which we think is un-

likely, or it could be a building or it could be a ship. We are hoping very much for it to be a ship."

Electronic soundings of the site - it is about a mile off Hayling Island and its exact location is being kept secret - show what could be the shape of a vessel, although they could be misleading said Mr Bullivant.

"Hopefully it is a ship. If it is, we have the oldest ship in the world. The earliest recorded at the moment is 4,000 years old," he said. Six thousand years ago, he said, the Solent was a river, and the team has asked experts on the period for their help in identifying the wood.

Meanwhile they intend to return and carry out a further survey of the site, about 20 feet below the surface, and plan to get a second opinion on the age of the wood.

It is not clear as to whether the site would have been dry land or shallow water at the time, and the likelihood of a 100ft long vessel existing in northern Europe at that period is extremely remote.

The oldest boat yet found anywhere in the world - a large dugout canoe - was made 8,000 years ago in what is now the Netherlands, but it is known that humans were carrying out ocean voyages of 200 miles 25,000 years ago, and 50 mile sea journeys as long as 60,000 years ago.



London witnessed its first May snow shower for nearly 20 years yesterday as the country slipped back into winter's icy grip.

Snow flurries dusted the capital, which spent much of late April basking in sunshine and temperatures in the 70s, and the London Weather Centre

reported a sleet shower on its roof. The snow was the first in May since 1979.

Many other parts of Britain were plunged back into wintry conditions, and many roads, like the one shown above in Co Durham, were covered by snow. Although it was quick to melt, heavy falls of snow blocked roads in

the Scottish Highlands and North Wales as temperatures dropped to around 7C below the May-time average.

Half an inch of rain fell over Norwich and London - the biggest down-pour since February and more than fell in the capital during the whole of

March and April. Forecasters warn of frost in many areas tonight more cold weather to come - which will worry farmers and gardeners.

The AA warned drivers to keep their speed down and keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front.

Photograph: PA

## Accused care worker 'doing a good job'

Louise Jury

A care supervisor accused of ill-treating mentally disabled residents always seemed to get on well with them, a colleague told a court yesterday. Judith Smelt, formerly the office administrator, said Lorraine Field "had a good rapport with [the residents] and they all seemed to be very fond of her".

Mrs Field, 42, of Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, has denied four counts of ill-treating residents at two residential homes formerly run by a company called Longcare in the town.

Another former member of staff, Desmond Tully, 33, of Exeter, Devon, also denies four charges of ill-treating residents. And former company director Angela Rowe, 39, of Windsor, Berkshire, denies two counts of ill-treating and two of wilfully neglecting residents in her care.

Kingston Crown Court also heard testimony from current colleagues of Mr Tully that he has "done a good job" at a home he now runs in Devon.

But in his closing speech for the prosecution, Jonathan Caplan QC, said the jury must assess the "compelling" evidence against all three defendants.

"This case is not about best practice, how best to run residential care homes for the mentally disabled. It's a case about falling below what is acceptable in running such homes and falling into the realms of the criminal law," he said.

He added that caring for the mentally disabled could be "demanding, frustrating, possibly risky, but that does not give anybody who has such a person in their care a license to ill-treat that person or to neglect their welfare".

## Bid to swim for help cost boy his life

Michael Streeter

Relatives of schoolboy Christopher Scott said yesterday they believed the 11-year-old died trying to swim for help for his two non-swimming friends when they became trapped on treacherous mudflats.

As the search for Nathan Sawyer and Ian Smye, who are still missing, was called off a second time as night fell yesterday, more details emerged about

their tragic outing. The trio had set out for a Sunday bike ride on the bleak Lincolnshire coastline of the Humber Estuary.

The area, south-east of Grimsby, is criss-crossed by gullies which can be swiftly filled by the incoming tide and it is feared that the boys became trapped and then swept away.

Hopes have virtually disappeared that Nathan, aged nine, and Ian, who would have been 10 yesterday, will be found alive.

The alarm was raised by their parents when they failed to return home, but it was not until the next day that the body of Christopher was spotted by a rescue helicopter crew.

A post-mortem examination was being carried out yesterday; police say they believe he drowned.

Valerie Scott, Christopher's grandmother, Valerie, said she thought that Christopher had died trying to save his friends.

"I believe that the other two could not swim and Christopher could. We think he tried to come back and get help. He would have tried to save his friends because he was like that and they were all very close."

She said the boys knew that the mudflats were dangerous, but added: "They were aware but I don't think they really understood what danger is. This is just a terrible thing to happen."

Prayers were said at a special

assembly yesterday at the boys' school in their home village of North Coates.

A police underwater search team joined the hunt yesterday and will be involved again today when the search resumes. An RAF helicopter and specially trained dogs will also be used.

Coastguard John Harrison admitted that hopes of finding the boys alive had passed.

"After this length of time it is highly unlikely," he said.

## Starting up a business? Find out why we're the number one choice.



**NatWest**  
More than just a bank

Whatever type of business you start up, it's never easy. While you may be very good at the business you've chosen, there are so many things to consider and this can be really daunting.

If so, let NatWest lend a hand. We're the first choice for small businesses and have helped thousands to start up and grow.

This experience has meant we've been able to develop a service that provides you with some tools that are so important in the early days.

- Free help and guidance from a NatWest Small Business Adviser.
- Free Banking for up to 18 months.\*
- Free Business Start-Up Guide.
- Free 'Help for Your Business' directory.
- Free Businessline, a telephone banking service.
- 25% discount on registering a business name.\*

To find out more or to open a Small Business Account, talk to the Small Business Adviser in your local high street branch. Alternatively you can call us on 0800 777 888.

If you're starting-up, there's only one choice. NatWest, the bank for small businesses.

\*National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lombard, London EC2P 2BP. Registered Number 929027 England. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. Member of the NatWest Life and NatWest Unit Trust Marketing Group advising on the life assurance, pensions and unit trust products only of that Marketing Group. 12 months' free banking is available to start-ups whether you are in credit or go overdraw if you do not pay more than £1,000,000 out of your account per annum. 18 months' free banking is available if you also complete and supply a certificate from a start-up training course provided by a suitably accredited training provider recognised by NatWest. "Free banking" only includes charges for posting money into and out of your account, and for running it - it does not include, for example, overdraft interest or related charges. Businessline - you will have to pay for the cost of the phone call. 25% discount on business name registration is offered by Business Names Registrations Plc when you open an account between 1/4/97 and 30/6/97. NatWest is not liable for any loss caused by delay, failure or error made by Business Names Registrations Plc. We may monitor and record your phone calls with us in order to maintain and improve our service. Ref. No. 96295

صكدا من الامن

## blair's britain



Cabinet potential: Pupils from Broadhurst School in Hampstead, north London outside No 10 Downing Street yesterday during a visit

Photograph: Rebecca Nader/PA

## Commons freshers shown the ropes

Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

By the end of the week they will have been inducted, tagged, administered, sworn in, lectured to and accommodated. They will be given a handbook, a video, a car park pass and endless cups of tea.

Some of the new boys and girls in the House of Commons say it feels just like the first day at school. Others, feeling

more grown up, compare the experience to freshers' week at university. After two years "in the sixth form" as a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate and six weeks' heavy preparation for the final exams on election day, they have finally arrived.

Some were always confident that they would make it to Parliament, but many believed just five days ago that they would be returning to normal life by now. Instead they have been thrown

into a euphoric round of introductions and practicalities.

There are 262 new members - more than at any time in living memory. Among them are 190 Labour members, 42 Conservative, 29 Liberal Democrat and one - Martin Bell - independent. Mr Bell, like the other opposition MPs, is being herded around by the opposition whips, Labour MPs by the government ones.

For the first time, the

Sergeant at Arms' office has set up an exhibition for the new members and is providing back-up material to help them find their feet. Before they can settle down to work they must get security passes, offices, secretaries and researchers.

Yesterday, about 50 new Labour members from across the South and Midlands gathered in a conference room to be told the ropes. Among them was Helen Brinton, a teacher, who won

Peterborough from the Tories. "We know all there is to know about being candidates, but we don't know about being MPs," she said.

Post-election camaraderie has broken out across party lines among the new members, and Mrs Brinton has even found herself a "pair" in the accommodation queue - a Tory with whom she will agree nights off. With a Labour majority of 179, many on her side of the house

will not be so lucky. Chris Pond, former director of the Low Pay Unit and new Labour member for Gravesend, says the induction process feels "like being back in short trousers," but is delightedly organising a Kent Labour MPs' group - not possible with the previous total of two but now plausible with eight.

Among his new Kent colleagues are Paul Clark, new Labour member for Gillingham, and Derek Wyatt, member for

Sittingbourne. Mr Clark, a TUC training centre manager, and Mr Wyatt, director of the computer channel on Sky Television, might both reasonably have expected to go back to their old jobs this week. But both say they knew they could win.

Most of these new members are already relishing the job ahead, and while a few admit to feeling a little caught up in the confusion of these first days, others are ebullient.

Fiona MacTaggart, new MP for Slough and former chair of Liberty and the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, already has her Parliamentary interests mapped out.

"I have spent quite a lot of time in this building. I have actually, in a former job, got a House of Commons' select committee to change government policy. But even if I hadn't done it before I would never be intimidated," she said.

## Foster quits over Cabinet post snub

Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

Tony Blair suffered his first ministerial resignation yesterday, just four days after coming into office.

Derek Foster, a former Labour chief whip and Shadow Cabinet member, was clearly angry that he had not been offered the Cabinet post he said he had been promised. He decided to stand down despite having accepted a job as Minister of State at the Office of Public Service, and it is understood he may now stand for election as Deputy Speaker.

"On reflection, after Saturday's appointments, I felt I might have more to offer in other ways and I will have an announcement to make in due course. I am perfectly happy with the outcome," he said.

Peter Kilfoyle, an education spokesman in Opposition, becomes Public Services Minister, but he takes on simply a junior ministerial rank.

Mr Foster, an elected chief whip, was one of many senior Labour figures who were bitterly disappointed at being offered jobs less senior to the ones that they shadowed in opposition.

Andrew Smith, the shadow transport secretary and Michael Meacher, shadow minister for environmental protection, were



Derek Foster: May seek election as Deputy Speaker

also in the Shadow Cabinet but not in the Cabinet.

Further down the ranks, a large number of junior shadow ministers are jobless or have more junior positions. Of 76 people who held Shadow Cabinet or ministerial positions, 17 have been demoted or sacked.

Both Janet Anderson, who was formerly shadow minister for women, and Graham Allen, a former spokesman on constitutional and environmental matters, will go to the whip's office.

For the rest, the only posts left are in the whip's office or at PPS level, the very bottom rung of the ministerial ladder.

Among those who were still

left without posts last night were Keith Vaz, former shadow minister for planning, Tom Pendry, former shadow minister for sport, and Lewis Moonie, another shadow minister at National Heritage.

Although Mr Blair has put a large number of women in his ministerial teams, several have been left out. Among them are Joan Ruddock, former shadow for environmental protection, Lin Golding, former shadow for food safety and agriculture and Ann Coffey, former shadow health minister.

However, there were jobs yesterday for Mark Fisher at heritage, Alf Dubbs, now Lord Dubbs, at Northern Ireland and for Andrew Hardie, QC, as Lord Advocate and life peer.

Some of the disappointed ones claimed yesterday that the system was unfair.

People who had previously worked for "big hitters" such as Gordon Brown or John Prescott could expect their former bosses to fight their corners for them, they said.

"It seems all this is done in a very random way. There's no assessment, there's no merit involved, it's who you know and if someone liked your face."

"No one actually sits down and says this is what we think about your performance," one of them said.

## Jowell to be Britain's first guardian of public health

Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

There will be no separate minister for women in the Labour government, it was confirmed yesterday, but Tony Blair has broken new ground by appointing Britain's first minister for public health.

The Prime Minister has kept his promise to make the role of minister for women a cabinet post by giving the responsibility to Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, despite the fact that her job also requires her to control the biggest budget of any Whitehall department.

Tessa Jowell, Minister of State at the Department of

Health, was yesterday given responsibility for public health, the first time the specialty has been recognised at ministerial level. One of her first tasks will be to implement a ban on tobacco advertising, to which Labour is pledged.

Labour promised last year that there would be a minister for women within the Cabinet, possibly with the title of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. She would be backed by a team of civil servants in the Cabinet Office, according to its policy document, "Governing for Equality".

Under the Conservatives, women's affairs were based at the Department of Education and Employment under Gillian Shephard, who delegated day-to-day responsibility to her junior minister, Cheryl Gillan. She had six senior civil servants working under her.

Under Labour, women's issues will be the preserve of the Department of Social Security. It is not yet clear what will happen to the civil servants in the sex and equality division, but there are some indications that their team will be split between the two departments.

Four could remain in the education and employment department working on legislation and on Equal Opportunities Commission issues, while the other two might go to social security to deal with international women's affairs, "main-

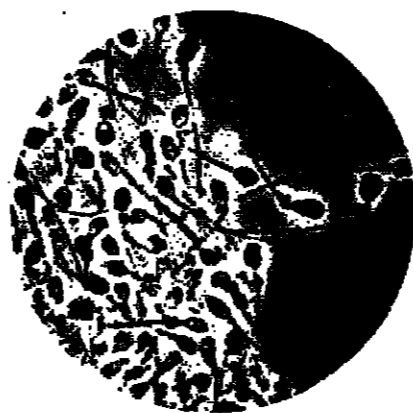
streaming", and the Women's National Commission.

Last night, a spokeswoman for the Pavecc Society, which lobbies for a stronger role for women in public life, said that while it was pleased women had a voice in the Cabinet it was also worried about how Ms Harman could do the job properly. "We are concerned that there is no other minister outside the Cabinet to take that responsibility. We need someone pushing very hard from outside and giving Harriet the information she needs," she said.

A spokesman for Ms Harman said she had always had a strong focus on women's issues and would relish the new opportunity. "Her view is that it is a brilliant opportunity for her to pick up a range of issues. These are central to her agenda, and having the responsibility at Cabinet level is something she is very keen on," he said.

Labour has 18 women ministers including five in the cabinet, while the Tories had 10 including two in the Cabinet.

Commenting on Ms Jowell's appointment, Donald Reid, chief executive of the Association for Public Health, said he was delighted that for the first time Britain had a minister for public health. "But better public health depends on more than one minister. It will depend on all the policies which affect health including those on poverty and the environment."



## The Greenpeace Credit Card. Welcomed at banks throughout the world.

The evidence is frightening. Certain industrial chemicals can disrupt the way our natural hormones work. Scientists have linked the dramatic drop in human sperm counts to the spread of such chemicals into the environment.

One of these, dioxin, is released during the manufacture and disposal of PVC (the main material in all credit cards).

It accumulates in the fatty tissues of organisms and begins its journey up the food chain. Humans, being at the very top, inherit the highest concentration.

What is a fact is that in the 50 years we have been producing industrial chemicals, problems in our reproductive systems have increased dramatically.



So why are we prepared to risk our very own existence when alternatives to PVC are readily available? Our new credit card is the first to be 99.9% PVC free.

The card is issued in partnership with The Co-operative Bank, the only UK bank

with its own ethical policy and innovative ecological mission statement. It is a small but positive step that will lead the way for others. And you can help simply by applying for a Greenpeace Credit Card. Now.

- £5 donated to Greenpeace for every account opened, plus 25p for every £100 spent.
- No annual fee ever. Guaranteed.
- Switch your balance to the Greenpeace Visa card... you could save over £150.\*
- A promise to match your highest existing credit card limit.

For further information clip the coupon or phone us free now quoting reference 506.

**0800 33 99 22**

Post to: Greenpeace Visa Card, FREEPOST MR 8192, Manchester M1 9AZ.

Name

Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms

Address

Postcode

Telephone

**GREENPEACE**

**The CO-OPERATIVE BANK**

The bank may decline any application. Credit facilities are subject to status and not available to minors. Written quotations available on request. \*Typical example is based on a transfer balance of £2000. Greenpeace Visa balance transfer at 12.9% APR would cost £240. Barclays Bank at 12.3% APR would cost £236. NatWest at 21.9% APR would cost £268 and HSBC at 18.3% APR would cost £246. Rates for purchases on the Greenpeace Visa card is 21.7% APR variable and minimum payment is 3% of your outstanding balance each month (minimum £5) or more if you wish. All rates correct at time of going to press 4/97. Registered office: The Co-operative Bank PLC, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP.

## ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPICE

MARE ST. LONDON E8 4SA  
(Charity Ref No. 231323)

Since 1985 we have shared the grief and eased the pain of countless suffering souls. Last year alone, 900 found peace with the help of your vital gifts. Most of them died of cancer - but so serenely that you would hardly know. Your concern is as encouraging as your generosity and we thank you for your inspiring trust.

Sister Superior.

## blair's britain

## Fun-seeking Redwood goes in quest of converts



A lighter shade of blue: John Redwood preaching the merits of his 'broad church' campaign for the Tory leadership yesterday.

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

John Redwood yesterday launched his campaign for the Tory party leadership committed to recreating a "broad church" which was "fun".

"I have to show they can win again and it is fun," he said. "One of the depressing things over the last five years is that we have not had enough fun in Conservative politics. We have to rekindle a sense of fun."

Mr Redwood, seen by many as a rather austere intellectual, may be regarded as the most unlikely "fun" candidate in the leadership campaign. But the extent of the Tory defeat, leaving the Tories with only 165 MPs to choose the new leader, has left Mr Redwood with little option but to widen his appeal from the Thatcherite right wing of the party.

He set out his new strategy by positioning himself more to the centre-right of his party, with a commitment to match Tony Blair's success in reviving his party's fortunes by consulting the grass roots. He also gave a pledge to listen more to the soundings from the 1922 Committee, which was decimated at the election.

Although he fought the general election on a personal pledge to reject the single European currency, Mr Redwood surprised a press conference at the Goring Hotel, near Westminster, by saying there was a lot he and the former Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke could agree on.

Rejecting a single-issue campaign, Mr Redwood said: "I don't want a factional party, obsessed by one issue."

"I do want a broad appeal. I believe that the Conservative Party is a broad church. It must stay as a broad church. The great problem is we don't have enough worshippers at the moment. We have to find more worshippers. You don't do that on one issue or one theme."

He carefully avoided the mis-

take made in his 1995 challenge to John Major for the leadership of being surrounded by the "whippers" Euro-sceptics - including the now deposed Tony Marlow in his striped blazer and Teresa Gorman - although the Euro-sceptics, John Williamson and David Wilshire, were there. He will not get the backing of any former Cabinet ministers, and the test will be the number and quality of middle-ranking ex-ministers who come out in his support.

He had to settle for senior backbenchers, Andrew Hunter, the former chairman of the Tory backbench Northern Ireland committee, and Maria Roe, former minister and past chairman of the Commons select committee on health.

Promising to reveal more support later, Mr Redwood said: "We will be doing the dance of the seven veils. It is so much more exciting that way."

The National Health Service and improvements in education are high on Mr Redwood's campaign agenda. But he also sought to focus the Tories in Opposition to attack the Government over Europe, insisting Robin Cook should have reached a deal to protect the jobs of British fishermen before moving to sign the European social chapter.

The campaign is also likely to hear much of the Tory success in Wokingham in taking 19 council seats out of 26 while the Tory party was facing "carnage" across the rest of the country. Mr Redwood said it showed that with good local organisation the Tories could remain popular with the voters.

He admitted the party has a tall task in reducing the average age of its members from over 60 years.

He wants to revive the grass roots, but he is against constitutional reform in the party, which he said would risk plunging the Conservatives into a rancorous internal dispute of the sort that kept Labour in opposition throughout the 1980s.

## EU rewards Britain with opt-out deal

Sarah Helm  
Brussels

Britain was yesterday rewarded for pledging to sign the European social chapter with the offer of a generous "opt out" from new open-frontier laws, paving the way to a possible deal on the next European treaty.

The Government's pledge on Monday to accept social legislation spurred Britain's partners into publishing a draft text on pooling justice and immigration powers which the Government can probably accept.

Although it has long seemed likely that Britain would be allowed to keep its internal frontier controls for other European Union nationals - while all other member states lift theirs - the text published yesterday contains the first firm proposal on how this would work.

Current power-sharing in areas of immigration control and home affairs, carried out by some EU countries under the so-called Schengen agreement, is now to be incorporated into the EU machinery. However, the text recognises that Britain and Northern Ireland, "because of their specificities" cannot be bound by the arrangements.

The "specificities" referred to constitutes the first clear recognition by other EU states that Britain's island status, and tra-

ditional reliance on border checks for immigration and crime control, does make it a special case in this policy area.

The "opt-out" offer is therefore not made reluctantly, as the social chapter opt out was in the Maastricht Treaty. Rather, it is a recognition on the EU's part of the need for sensible flexibility, and could signal a turning point in the way negotiations on integration are conducted in future. Furthermore, the "opt-out" offer is far more generous than had been expected while the Conservative government was in power.

Britain is, effectively, to be allowed to pick and choose, which areas of home affairs and immigration power-sharing it wants to be a part of. There are aspects of the new arrangements which Britain wants to share in, namely police co-operation and tougher anti-asylum checks at external borders.

Britain "may, at any time, accept some or all of the provisions ..." says the draft protocol.

Despite the clear attractions of the new offer, prepared by the Dutch government, which currently holds the EU presidency, British officials warned against talks of an early agreement in this area. The officials clearly believe Britain can still squeeze a better deal before the Amsterdam summit in just six weeks time.

## DAILY POEM

## Kansas City

By Linda France

On a quiet one off the main drag,  
it's dark outside the rinky-dink De Luxe -  
a wired indigo of twinklers, shadows

that might be driftsmoke: if only  
Old Fireball was cutting some rug.  
The slammer is shut like a kisser

that doesn't dig liquor any day  
of the week. It's fish-black unlucky,  
hawk's out with his axe; but we know

when we fall in there'll be scumpleen fish  
to blow our lids, glistering scales and hot pepper,  
some solid juice to wash it down.

We've been saving our rocks all week.  
Let's hit that belly-chord. Shake out your vine  
and shimmy like a foxy fish.

This poem appears in *Storyville*, Linda France's third collection, which is published tomorrow by Bloodaxe Books (£6.95). The volume's title sequence, from which "Kansas City"

From May 29th BT are  
cutting national daytime calls by

10%

And with BT's Business Choices discounts you could save an additional 27% on all your national calls for a quarterly site fee of only £5 excl. VAT. Call BT for your business savings check-up on **Freefone 0800 800 800**.

5 minute national daytime call	Before May 29th	After May 29th	With Business Choices Level 1
	44p	40p	29p

SP MINIMUM CHARGE PER CALL. DIRECT DIALED WEEKDAY CALLS ONLY. DIFFERENT RATES APPLY TO BT PUBLIC PAYPHONE AND CHARGE CARD CALLS.

The cost of calling keeps on falling. **BT**

501 من الامارات

## blair's britain

Tony Banks, the man the PM failed to gag, on the joys and otherwise of his first day at work

## Minister for Sport finds his office: 'It's like a cell'

Kathy Marks

The chauffeur-driven limousine drew up outside the colonnaded entrance to the Department of National Heritage. The back door opened, and a jauntily dressed man in a suit and tie emerged. The new Minister for Sport had arrived for his first day at work.

Tony Banks was an hour late, having dropped in at Upton Park, West Ham's football ground, for a photocall. The delay gave his civil servants the jitters, given his admission in a radio interview earlier in the day that he had no idea where his new office was located.

For Mr Banks, a maverick left-winger, the job offer was a bolt from the blue. But the job itself could not have better suited the MP for Newham North East, a fanatical Chelsea supporter. "It's like going to heaven without dying," he said.

The Department of National Her-

itage was not quite sure what had hit it yesterday. Officials were waiting all morning to escort their new minister to meetings with Chris Smith, the Secretary of State. But when Mr Banks finally turned up at 2pm, he brushed them aside. Flouting the edict by Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, that interviews with ministers must be approved by him, he took off to the nearby Sports Café for an impromptu press conference.

Perched at a table, swigging on a bottle of Rolling Rock beer, he pronounced on life, politics and football. Wembley Stadium was "crap", he declared. Despite his elevated station, Mr Banks has no plans to tone himself down. "I've not been made Foreign Secretary, where diplomatic language is essential," he said. "I shall be using the language of sport, which does get colourful from time to time."

The men from the ministry were

getting restless. It was time for Mr Banks to get acquainted with his workplace. He entered the building. "Posh, innit?" he observed, looking round at the mirrored foyer with its pot plants and waterfalls.

By the time he reached his office, a spartan room with net curtains, he had recovered his sang-froid. "God, this is a bit rudimentary, isn't it? It's like a prison cell. I don't think much of the trappings of office so far." Glancing down, he added: "Nothing in the out tray, nothing in the urgent tray, nothing in the pending tray, just the way it should be."

Mr Banks's new job will present him with some difficult conundrums. What if a Council of Ministers meeting should fall on 17 May, when Chelsea meets Middlesbrough in the FA Cup Final? "You must be joking. Nothing would stop me going to the Cup Final unless I was dead. And if I was dead I'd want my ashes taken there."



Delayed kick-off: Tony Banks, the new Minister for Sport, relaxing with a beer before taking up office Photograph: Andrew Buurman

## Clamp on briefings could backfire

Christian Wolmar  
Westminster Correspondent

Attempts to impose a rigid discipline on government announcements and policy initiatives could rebound and lead to an increase in leaks, according to senior civil servants.

Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, is seeking to ensure that all major announcements of government policy and even interviews with ministers are co-ordinated through his office. Ministers are also supposed to notify Downing Street if they go to lunches with journalists or meet them informally for off-the-record briefings.

Both current and former civil servants reacted with a "seen-it-all-before" attitude, saying that this type of strong central control has been attempted in the past but proved unworkable.

Indeed, they point to similar injunctions from Bernard Ingham, Margaret Thatcher's press secretary, who also wanted similar co-ordination of the government's publicity machine. A press officer in a major department during the 1980s said: "Ingham tried to exert control and issued instructions, but within a few days we started ignoring it because people outside No 10 would sneer at it."

There were typical Civil Service ways of ignoring the instruction, he said: "We would simply carry on turning a blind eye and if No 10 questioned it, we would just say - 'Oh, sorry, didn't we tell you'."

However, unlike Mr Ingham, Mr Campbell is not a civil servant but a "special adviser", an overtly political appointment,

which civil servants feel is a better arrangement.

There is fierce departmental loyalty from both civil servants and ministers who will resist too much pressure from the centre.

It is not only the independence of the government departments which will prevent Mr Campbell from achieving his sought-after hegemony, but the sheer volume of government work. A senior Labour source said: "It's not like being in opposition when you are not actually making any decisions that affect anybody. It's the whole government machine."

An average department such as transport or environment might put out up to 600 press releases and even if the Government sensibly reduced this number by half, the sheer volume would be impossible to control.

A head of information explained: "The previous government tried to co-ordinate announcements through Michael Heseltine's committee, EDCP. But they would do stupid things like decide the day something should be announced without anyone from the relevant department being consulted and they would find that the minister was abroad, or that an outside group involved in the launch would not be available."

He added: "The real problem is that if you delay an announcement to, as they put it, co-ordinate the government message, it risks leaking out in a completely unplanned way. You can't sit on things because it will be in someone's interest to leak it."

## Brown stands firm over VAT

Sarah Helm  
Brussels

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, yesterday reaffirmed his commitment to cut VAT on heating fuel, despite warnings from Brussels that the move could breach the spirit of European common tax rules.

However, Mr Brown and the European Commission seemed determined to avoid a direct clash over the issue for as long as possible.

Mr Brown has made clear that the Government's legal advice states that the move is in no way illegal under EU law. To abandon a manifesto pledge so soon after the election would clearly be unthinkable for the Government. For its part, the European Commission concedes that the move is not "illegal" as such, but simply contrary to the objectives of tax harmonisation directives.

There is clearly little desire on the Commission's part to crack the whip at a time when hopes of consensus on a range of other key issues are higher than they have been for many years. Nevertheless, the conflict

over the VAT move is unlikely to disappear. Behind the immediate disagreement lies the broader, highly contentious, question of how far member states should be expected to develop common tax levels.

The Commission's long-standing efforts to harmonise VAT levels have been largely ineffective. A minimum of 15 per cent has been set for most products, but how binding this figure is remains open to interpretation. Britain wants to reduce VAT on domestic fuel from 8 to 5 per cent.

The European Commission, along with member states, is pressing for more harmonisation in tax levels. Efforts have so far concentrated on indirect taxes, such as VAT, but harmonisation of certain direct taxes is also planned. Pressure for greater co-ordination has increased in the run-up to economic and monetary union.

If the Commission decides to get tough, it could take the Government to the European Court of Justice. And if other member states thought Britain was being let off the hook, they could go to the court.



## The Greenpeace Credit Card. Welcomed at educational establishments.

The limit of a child's IQ may be formed not by prep school but by a toxic chemical called dioxin.

Dioxin is released during the manufacture and disposal of PVC (which is the main material in all credit cards), it resists natural breakdown and accumulates in the fatty tissues of organisms.

As dioxins travel up the food chain, levels become concentrated.

Dioxins and other chemicals found in monkeys have been shown to cause learning and behavioural problems in their offspring.

Women of childbearing age could now have sufficient levels in their bodies to affect their newborn children.

Politicians assure us that levels are not harmful.

But why take any risk when alternatives to PVC are readily available?

That's why our new credit card is the first to be

99.9% PVC free.

The card is issued in partnership with



The Co-operative Bank, the only UK bank with its own ethical policy and innovative ecological mission statement. It is a small but positive step that will lead the way for others. And you can help simply by applying for a Greenpeace Credit Card. Now.

- £5 donated to Greenpeace for every account opened, plus 25p for every £100 spent.
- No annual fee ever. Guaranteed.
- Switch your balance to the Greenpeace Visa card... you could save over £150.\*
- A promise to match your highest existing credit card limit.

For further information clip the coupon or phone us free now quoting reference 507.

**0800 33 99 22**

Post to: Greenpeace Visa Card, FREEPOST MR 8192, Manchester M1 9AZ.

Name

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address

Postcode

Telephone

**GREENPEACE**

**The COOPERATIVE BANK**

The bank may decline any application. Credit facilities are subject to status and not available to minors. Written quotations available on request. \*Typical example is based on a transfer balance of £2000. Greenpeace Visa balance transfer at 12.6% APR would cost £240. Barclays Bank at 22.3% APR would cost £396. NatWest at 21.9% APR would cost £386 and MBNA at 18.9% APR would cost £348. Rates for purchases on the Greenpeace Visa card is 21.7% APR variable and minimum payment is 3% of your outstanding balance each month (minimum £5) or more if you wish. All rates correct at time of going to press 4/97. Registered office: The Co-operative Bank p.l.c., 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP.

## blair's britain

## New ministers keep their promises

## NAZI GOLD

Louise Jury

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, yesterday announced that Britain was ready to host an international conference on Nazi gold.

In one of his first steps in his new post, he acted quickly to fulfil a pledge made to Jewish organisations who have lobbied for joint international action to settle the affair.

He also strongly hinted that the remaining war-time gold, due to be returned to governments whose reserves were looted by the Nazis, could go instead to victims of the Holocaust.

The pool was likely to have included personal gold from Jewish victims of Nazism, such as that found in the teeth of concentration camp victims, a new report from the Foreign Office admitted yesterday.

Jewish organisations have long claimed that the Allies failed to distinguish between personal gold, where efforts should have been made to return it to individuals, and that which belonged to governments.

They hailed yesterday's report as further proof that the £46m of gold still held in the Bank of England and in the American Federal Reserve should go to make amends for that failure.

Mr Cook made clear his intention to resolve quickly the question of the remaining gold, which has been held under the Tripartite Gold Commission of America, France and Britain

since the end of the war. He said there had rightly been international concern about the fate of the gold looted by the Nazis, and that: "One of the responsibilities of those living now is to ensure that the truth is known about that dark period in Europe's past."

Unveiling the Foreign Office report into what happened to gold found in the British sections of Germany, he said it was clear that some gold taken from individual victims of Nazism may have found its way into the pool.

"This strengthens the case for looking imaginatively for ways of compensating the victims or their direct descendants."

A spokeswoman for the Holocaust Educational Trust said it welcomed the report. "It says there were errors made and that it was understandable. We've never said anything other than that. We now need to look at ways to correct it."

It was widely known that the Germans had melted down gold looted from individuals, but the report shows this was effectively ignored for practical reasons. However, the Bank of England has advised the Foreign Office that it would have been possible to detect large amounts of dental gold if tests had been carried out.

The report highlights the problems, faced by officials working in Germany, caused by inadequate definitions of what was monetary gold – broadly bars and coins – and non-monetary gold – that taken from victims.



Back to work (from top left, clockwise): Robin Cook, David Blunkett, Jack Cunningham and Jack Straw

Photomontage: Jonathan Anstee

## FOOD FIT TO EAT

Glenda Cooper  
Consumer Affairs  
Correspondent

An independent food standards agency will be the first priority for a reorganised and renamed Ministry of Agriculture, its new head Dr Jack Cunningham pledged yesterday.

He added that the Government would also seek a "positive and constructive" dialogue with the EU over the ban on British beef exports.

Dr Cunningham's vision for the ministry was one that was "more open" and with more consumer voices, he said. He was due to meet Professor Philip James of Aberdeen University last night to discuss the report on food safety commissioned earlier by Tony Blair. A period of consultation would then be followed by legislation "as soon as the business timetable allows", but Dr Cunningham refused to speculate on how long this would take.

MAFF would also be reorganised as people likely to be involved in the food agency move over there. Dr Cunningham revealed that the ministry would be renamed but said the new name had not been finalised.

He also promised that reports on food safety would be made available to the public. "I have already given instructions to my department that any issue concerning public health and well-being must be brought forward immediately."

On BSE, he said that he would not flinch from tough decisions to be made over the world-wide ban on British beef. He said he planned to go to Brussels on Monday for introductory meetings with the EU Farm Commissioner, Franz Fischler, and the Fisheries Commissioner, Emma Bonino.

He said he would not put specific proposals to the commissioners on Monday, but pledged the Blair government would make a "fresh start" on tackling the BSE crisis.

He added: "In general, I think the Labour government has a better chance of doing constructive business with the EU, full stop, whatever the issue, simply because we shall be more positive about the EU."

## NURSERY VOUCHERS

Judith Judd  
Education Editor

Education ministers began work yesterday on plans to dismantle the Conservatives' nursery voucher scheme as soon as possible. They are studying options for switching money from the scheme, which gives the parents of all four-year-olds £1100 worth of vouchers a year, back to the local authorities.

Work will start shortly on developing partnerships between local authorities, private nurseries and voluntary groups to run childcare and nursery education. Legislation to end the scheme is unnecessary, but there will be a Bill to end the assisted places scheme.

Money from the scheme will be used

to reduce class sizes for five- to seven-year-olds. Talks with local authorities on ways of cutting class sizes will begin almost at once, although no money will be available until next April.

Raising standards and improving basic literacy and numeracy will be the centrepiece of the White Paper to be published in June. A Bill in the autumn will also end grant-maintained status, and former opted-out schools will have the choice of becoming foundation schools, voluntary-aided like church schools or returning to council control. Foundation schools will have greater freedom than local authority schools but will have to appoint local authority governors.

However, ministers say there will be consultation with grant-maintained schools in the next few months.

The Bill will also lead to parents in areas with grammar schools being able to vote on whether they wish to keep a selective system.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, will meet Sir Ron Dearing, former chairman of the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority, this month about the future shape of higher education. Sir Ron's review is not due until July, so the Queen's Speech will include a general enabling clause foreshadowing changes in student loans and university structure.

Today, ministers will announce plans for fulfilling one of their most ambitious pledges: how to get 250,000 young people off the dole and into either jobs or training using money from a windfall tax on privatised utilities.

Jason Bennetto  
Crime Correspondent

An audit of the finances and running of the Prison Service is to be set up as a "matter of urgency", it was disclosed yesterday.

The review is aimed at reducing overcrowding and cutting the escalating prison costs. It is expected to lead to closer ties between the Home Office and Prison Service and give ministers greater responsibility for operational and policy decisions.

Labour must also decide whether to ditch its opposition to private jails in order to cope with the rising prison population and need for extra accommodation. Private companies that have already signed contracts to build new jails will be allowed to con-

## PRISONS AUDIT

tinue. The number of people in jails in England and Wales has just reached the record 60,000 mark.

It also became clear yesterday that an extra 40,000 handguns are almost certain to be banned – making all revolvers illegal. MPs are expected by October next year to be given a free vote on banning the small calibre .22 revolvers that remain legal, said Home Office sources. Labour has already backed an all-out ban and with its huge majority, most of whom are opposed to the ownership of firearms, a vote against handguns is a certainty. The cost of compensation is likely to be at least £12m.

Jack Straw, the new Home Secretary, said yesterday that his Crime and Disorder Bill, to be announced next Wednesday, would concentrate on

youth crime and neighbour nuisances.

Clearly enjoying his new job, he added: "Four days in Government is better than 18 years in Opposition."

Supporting Mr Straw at the Home Office is Alun Michael, who will be responsible for police matters; Joyce Quin, who will deal with prisons, asylum and immigration; Mike O'Brien, immigration case work; George Howarth, drugs, detailed prison issues and the fire service; and Lord Williams of Mostyn, the Lords and constitutional issues.

Later this week, Mr Straw will meet the director general of the Prison Service, Richard Tilt. Meetings with Metropolitan police commissioner Sir Paul Condon and HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Sir David Ramsbotham will follow.

## Programme falls into place

Anthony Bevins  
Political Editor

The Queen's Speech, the Government's parliamentary programme for the next 18 months, is expected to include action on hereditary peers and a Freedom of Information Bill when it is delivered next Wednesday.

The Prime Minister's office said yesterday that Tony Blair had already held a number of meetings on the speech, and a draft was well advanced.

Because of the timing of the election, the parliamentary year will not end, as usual, this autumn, but will continue until the autumn of next year – giving a longer run for the legislation on core commitments like education, law and order.

Early action will be required to set up the devolution referendums for Scotland and Wales, to give specific popular blessing to legislation which would then

be put to Parliament. One advantage of the referendums is that they could provide a democratic mandate for the Government to divert Bills away from the Commons Chamber into "upstairs" committees – denying opponents the chance to clog up the parliamentary works.

Some peers are arguing that if Labour breaks the convention that constitutional legislation should be dealt with in the Commons Chamber, they would then feel free to break the convention that the Lords does not oppose legislation specified in a manifesto. However, it is thought that some ministers would welcome a confrontation between a Labour government, elected with such a striking majority, and hereditary backwoodsmen from the Lords.

Labour promised a Freedom of Information Act in its 1974 manifesto, and it is therefore a pledge that has been reneged

upon before. But because Mr Blair has laid so much store in trust, and in saying that he will not promise anything he will not deliver, the current manifesto commitment on freedom of information is said to be "firm".

On education, the Government has promised early action on nursery vouchers, class sizes,

the assisted places scheme phase-out and new powers to be taken on school standards and local education authorities.

Law and order legislation will include "fast-track" hearings of cases involving persistent young offenders, and responsibility orders for parents of delinquent children.

## DIRECT LINE INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT

**Saving up to 6.10% on your savings**  
**conservative rates**  
**even a big week ending**  
**You can save yourself**  
**the trouble of**  
**looking for better rates**

	£1- £4,999	£5,000- £9,999	£10,000- £24,999	£25,000- £49,999	£50,000- £99,999	£100,000+
Direct Line Instant Access Account	4.50%	5.00%	5.60%	5.75%	6.00%	6.10%
Halifax Solid Gold (30 Day Notice)	3.00%†	3.25%	4.00%	4.50%	4.60%	4.60%
Woolwich Premier 90 (90 Day Notice)	N/A	3.50%	4.20%	4.80%	5.10%	5.90%††
Nationwide Capitalbuilder 90 Day	4.00%††	4.30%	4.50%	4.80%	5.10%	5.10%

All rates are gross\* and correct at 28th April 1997. Sources: Moneyfacts. †Rate effective from £500. ††Rate effective from £1,000 (from 1st May rate effective from £500). †††Rate effective from £200,000.

- Whatever you're saving for you'll get it quicker if you save with Direct Line.
- Especially since our rates have recently risen again.
- And with Direct Line you get instant access to your money as well as higher rates.
- The more savings you have the higher our rates get.
- You can pool your savings with family or friends for even higher returns.
- So make the most of your savings, move them to Direct Line.



**DIRECT LINE**  
SAVINGS

0181 667 1121

0161 833 1121

0141 221 1121

LONDON

MANCHESTER

GLASGOW

CALL ANYTIME 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday. Please quote ref. IND74  
 www.directline.co.uk • ITV Teletext page 377.  
 A Royal Bank of Scotland company.



Savings are provided by Direct Line Financial Services Limited, 250 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5SR, which is a member of the Deposit Protection Scheme, established under the Banking Act 1987 (as amended). Payments under the scheme are limited to 95% of a depositor's total deposits, subject to a maximum payment to any one depositor of £10,000 (or £20,000 if granted). Further details of the Scheme are available on request. \*The gross rate is the rate paid without the deduction of income tax. All rates shown are subject to variation and are based on annual payment of interest. For your added security, telephone calls may be recorded and the recording kept secure. We may also monitor telephone calls for the aim of improving our service to you. Direct Line and the red telephone icon are the trademarks of Direct Line Insurance plc. Used with its permission.

## Interest rate change

Allied Irish Bank (GB) announces that with effect from close of business on 6 May 1997 its Base Rate was increased from 6.00% to 6.25% pa.

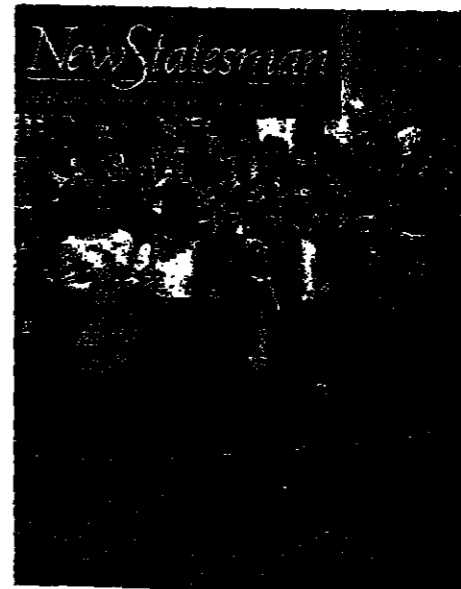
Allied Irish Bank (GB)  
Bankcentre, Belmont Road  
Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1SA.  
Telephone (01895) 272222



Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c. Full service banking in Britain, Ireland and the USA, Ireland's leading banking group employing 15,300 people. Assets of £26 billion.  

## NEW GOVERNMENT

New Statesman  
WHAT'S GOING ON



## HISTORIC EDITION

New era, new ideas:  
Anthony Giddens, Gavyn Davies  
New era, new art:  
Irvine Welsh, Alan Warner,  
Fiona Rae, Kathleen Jamie  
New era, new MPs:  
our exclusive, complete guide

**£3.50 OUT NOW**

سكرا من الامن

صباحنا من الامم



# The Greenpeace Credit Card. Welcomed at fast food outlets throughout the world.

PVC is the mother of plastic pollutants  
(and is the main material in all credit cards).

Toxic chemicals released during its  
manufacture and disposal resist natural  
breakdown and accumulate in the fatty  
tissues of organisms.

As they travel up the food chain, levels  
become concentrated in breast milk.  
And the recent discovery that phthalates  
are present in dried baby milk means that  
it is impossible to avoid feeding toxic  
chemicals to new born babies.

Politicians assure us that levels are  
not harmful.

Scientists are divided.



Greenpeace says stuff  
that. Why take the risk  
when alternatives to PVC  
are readily available?

That's why our new  
credit card is the first to be  
99.9% PVC free.

It is a small but positive step that will  
lead the way for others.

The card is issued in partnership with

The Co-operative Bank, the only UK bank  
with its own ethical policy and innovative  
ecological mission statement.

For every account opened Greenpeace  
receive a £5 donation and then continue to  
be paid a further 25p for every £100 spent.

This is brilliant for us – and it's pretty  
good for you.

The Co-operative Bank offers a unique  
guarantee, never to charge you an annual  
fee in your entire lifetime.

You can also switch to The Greenpeace  
Visa card, bringing with you any existing  
overall balance and repay it at a  
preferential rate of 1% a month (12.6%  
APR variable).

This alone could save you over £150.\*

The standard rate for purchases is  
21.7% APR (variable).

And to top it all, we'll at least match the  
credit limit on your existing card.

For further information clip the coupon or  
phone us free now quoting reference 508.

**0800 33 99 22**

Post to: Greenpeace Visa Card, FREEPOST MR 8192, Manchester M1 9AZ.

Name

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address

508

Postcode

Telephone

**GREENPEACE**

**The COOPERATIVE BANK**

The bank may decline any application. Credit facilities are subject to status and not available to minors. Written quotations available on request. \*Typical example is based on a transfer balance of £2000.  
Greenpeace Visa balance transfer at 12.6% APR would cost £240. Barclays Bank at 22.3% APR would cost £396; NatWest at 21.9% APR would cost £386 and MBNA at 18.9% APR would cost £348.  
Rates for purchases on the Greenpeace Visa card is 21.7% APR variable and minimum payment is 3% of your outstanding balance each month (minimum £5) or more if you wish.  
All rates correct at time of going to press 4/97. Registered office: The Co-operative Bank p.l.c., 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP

## news

# Sedative cocktails fed to the elderly

Jeremy Latrance  
Health Editor

A chemical cocktail of sedative drugs is being mass prescribed to elderly people living in nursing and residential homes to keep them quiet and make them easier to manage, according to a report.

The practice of "switching the patients out with the lights" is causing increasing concern among medical and charitable organisations, according to the report by the Royal College of Physicians. More than 90 per cent of residents of the homes are prescribed drugs, and nearly half are taking major tranquillisers and other sedatives.

Dr Michael Denham, consultant geriatrician at Northwick Park Hospital and chairman of the working party that produced the report, said there had been a six-fold increase in places in private and voluntary homes since 1983, fuelled by a 30 per cent decline in NHS long-term care, which had placed a severe burden on local GPs.

"I fear that in some homes these drugs are being used like a chemical ball and chain to keep patients quiet. These are very frail physically and mentally ill people and virtually the entire lot are on medication, with a large proportion on sedatives. It is a growing cause for concern."

National guidelines on prescribing drugs in the homes should be reviewed and closer monitoring introduced, possibly by giving overall responsibility to one or two GPs for each home, the report says. Dr Denham cited the example of one resident who reported "feeling alive again" after being weaned off a sedative.

The report, *Medication for Older People*, says that the over-65s are being prescribed 50 per cent more drugs than a decade ago. The annual number of items prescribed to older people

has risen from 14.6 on average in 1985 to 21.8 in 1995. The cost of each prescription rose from £4.10 to £7.55 and accounted for almost half the increase in health authority drugs bills over the decade. Although older people make up 18 per cent of the population they receive 45 per cent of all prescriptions dispensed.

The report, an update of an earlier one published in 1984, says that the rapid growth in prescribing to the elderly suggests many patients are receiving inappropriate or unnecessary treatment as well as placing an increasing burden on the NHS drugs bill.

Adverse reactions are three times more common among the over-60s compared with the under-30s, mainly because they take more drugs. Innovations by the pharmaceutical industry have greatly increased the range of medicines suitable for older people but "more attention must be paid to making sure the medicines given are both suitable and effective," the report says.

Dr Denham said doctors under pressure tended to have a reflex response to certain conditions such as dizziness in older people and prescribe a tranquilliser without investigating further. "If you leave them on tranquillisers they may end up with symptoms of Parkinsonism ... There is a tendency to treat the symptom rather than the disease."

However, underprescribing is also a problem, driven by some doctors' ageist approach to treatment. The report says there is evidence that older people benefit more from drugs for heart conditions and high blood pressure than younger people, yet they are less likely to receive them.

"It is sad to note that ... the attitudes of some doctors [remain] fixed to the concept of chronological age rather than biological age - the capacity of an individual to benefit," it says.



Door of perception: The portrait of Prince Charles, by Michael Noakes, which is on display at the Mall Galleries, London. Photograph: Andrew Buurman

## Door into a royal psyche

David Lister  
Arts News Editor

The portrait is headed "HRH The Prince Of Wales, Patron of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, at Highgrove". It is perhaps the most unusual portrait yet of the Prince, with the artist attempting to stress his patronage of the Royal College by exploring a troubled psyche.

The 6ft-high painting shows Prince Charles, who is Patron of the Royal College, standing at the door of a drawing room in Highgrove, his Gloucestershire home. The artist is Michael Noakes, who has spent three years working on the portrait. He has also painted Margaret Thatcher and President Clinton and is a past chairman of the Contemporary Portrait Society.

He said yesterday: "I wanted to avoid painting a proud Prince ... although it shows I hope a man with intelligence and humour, it implies too the sad side of his life."

He added: "I have done something that is unusual by any standards and that is unique with royal portraits, for the canvas is not a regular shape. It follows the line of the architrave around the doorway and the angle of the open door itself: the base is shaped around the tip of his foot over the edge of a mat, and the angled view of that."

The painting is being exhibited at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters' Exhibition at The Mall Galleries, The Mall, London.

## West Country cyclists set free from fumes

Stephen Goodwin  
Heritage Correspondent

A 250-mile section of the National Cycle Network opens today, guiding cyclists away from the fumes and snarl-ups of car-borne tourists on a relatively peaceful route from Padstow in Cornwall to Bristol and Bath.

The inauguration of the West Country Way will be followed later this month by the opening of a 370-mile east of England section from Harwich to Hull,

expanding the Network to a total of 880 miles so far.

From the fishing port of Padstow, the West Country Way winds over Bodmin Moor to pass through Bude, Bideford and Barnstaple before rising to 2,000 feet over Exmoor.

Cyclists will get a taste of the serene solitude of the Somerset levels before climbing again over the Mendips.

Some 74 miles of the Way are car-free, following disused railway tracks, tow paths and forest trails. Elsewhere the signed

route follows quiet country lanes - roads used by less than 1,000 vehicles a day - with just short sections of busier highway.

The West Country Way is one of the most scenic sections of the Network being developed by the charity Sustrans in partnership with local authorities. Funded by £43.5m of lottery money, the project aims to have at least 2,500 miles of safe cycle ways open by 2000 and 6,500 miles by 2005.

Ben Hamilton-Baillie, Sustrans' regional manager, said: "Everyone with an interest in the countryside and the quality of life in the South-west is concerned about the relentless growth in motor traffic."

"Developing cycle tourism will bring significant economic benefits to small communities without causing environmental damage."

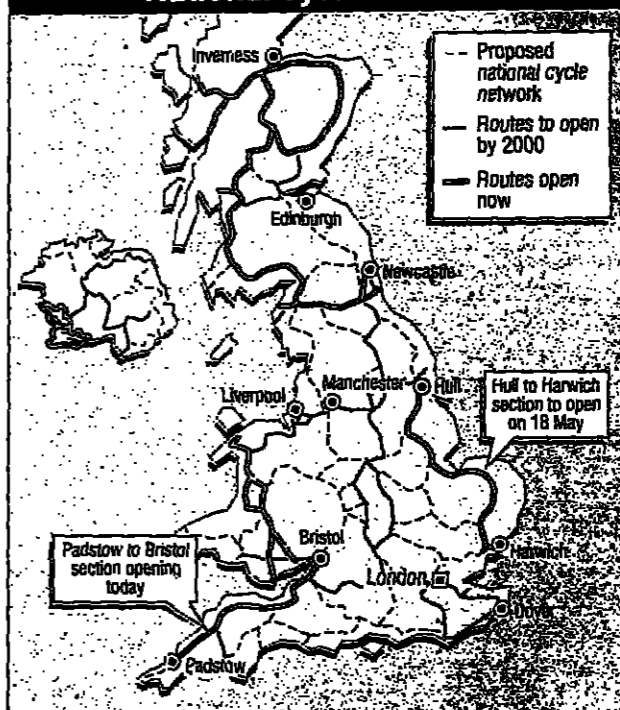
The West Country Way currently connects with the railway in eight locations. Improving links to stations and bike carriage on trains is a high priority for the development of the route.

Creation of the Network is a complex business. For most sections, 1997 is the year for detailed negotiations with landowners and local authorities. Every section which requires construction or upgrading has to be surveyed, negotiated, approved, designed, built and signed.

The Harwich to Hull section was not planned to open until after the Millennium, but enthusiastic support from local authorities has meant a route across the wolds, fens and Norfolk Broads has been mapped and signed well ahead of schedule. The route takes in the old cathedral city of Lincoln and Norwich.

However, the Network is not all about recreation or long distance touring. As important in reducing car journeys will be links through urban areas and between town and country, enabling people to cycle to work, to school and the shops.

### National cycle network



1997 'Top Direct Lender Over Two Years' - What Mortgage Magazine.

**Moving house?**  
**Call Direct Line for a cheaper mortgage.**  
**Not moving house? Ditto.**

\*Mortgage example of £80,000 repayable over 25 years (300 monthly payments).

Lender	APR (Variable)	Monthly Repayments (after tax relief)	Monthly saving with Direct Line	Total Payable (gross)
WOOLWICH	7.15%	£568.69	£57.41	£176,138
HALIFAX	7.8%	£557.83	£49.61	£177,156
ABBEY NATIONAL	7.4%	£557.34	£49.12	£175,799
DIRECT LINE	6.5%	£508.22		£159,805

After based on Standard Variable Rate. Repayment mortgages, correct as 28th April 1997. Source: Mortgage. \*Mortgage has been calculated under current tax legislation which may alter.

- It doesn't matter whether you're moving house or not, you can still move your mortgage to Direct Line.
- It could save you around £50\* a month.
- You can borrow up to 90% of the value of your home.
- There's a free valuation.
- No early redemption, arrangement or mortgage indemnity fees.
- Direct line guarantees to save you 20%\* on your existing buildings insurance.
- If you transfer your mortgage without moving house Direct Line will pay your legal fees†.
- Call now, we're waiting to beat the banks and building societies.



**DIRECT LINE**  
MORTGAGES

0181 649 9099

0161 831 9099

0141 221 9099

LONDON

MANCHESTER

GLASGOW

CALL ANYTIME 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday. Please quote ref. IND111  
www.directline.co.uk

Mortgages provided by Direct Line Financial Services Limited, 100 Victoria Street, Glasgow G2 3JL. Direct Line mortgages from £25,000 are available for up to 90% of the property value or purchase price, whichever is the lower. Repayment mortgages are available for up to 25 years. Direct Line does not have the right to decline any application. Life assurance to cover the interest of the loan and security in the form of a first legal charge is required. A home valuation fee will be required. The property must be fully insured for the duration of the loan. All rates quoted are variable and subject to change. The interest rate will be reduced to the borrower when the mortgage is set up for the borrower's own use. Direct Line will pay your legal fees, provided you complete the transfer of your mortgage to your existing home using our solicitors' services. If you decide to use your own solicitor to carry out the work involved in the transfer of your mortgage and the new mortgage is more than £200, Direct Line will pay the difference up to a maximum of £200. This fee limited offer may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Written quotations are available on request. Some mortgages may require payment of a fee to the solicitor handling the mortgage. This guaranteeing home ownership only applies if your current mortgage is arranged by your lender and is subject to our normal underwriting criteria and corresponding levels of cover. Please contact our solicitors for more details. YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. \*Direct Line and the red telephone icon are the registered trademarks of Direct Line Insurance plc and used with its permission.

### YOU COULD PAY LESS.

For affordable private health cover call us NOW.

Prime Health

0800 779 955

Quoting reference M05001NG

If we're faster and cheaper than the AA or RAC why join them?

When your car lets you down, Green Flag won't. On average, we rescue our members in just 35 minutes. And if we're not with you in less than one hour, you can claim £10 back.

CALL FREE today on 0800 001 353

**Green Flag**  
Motoring Assistance

WE LEAVE EVERYONE STANDING BUT YOU

\*Verified from customer satisfaction questionnaire

**SWIFTCALL**  
0800 769 0066

LOW COST INTERNATIONAL PHONE CALLS  
For further information on hundreds of other destinations and how to use, call us now for free.

SWIFTCALL 0800 769 0066

AUSTRALIA

20p 49p

Swiftcall B.T.

INDIA

60p £1.20

Swiftcall B.T.

GERMANY

16p 28p

Swiftcall B.T.

NIGERIA

70p £1.05

Swiftcall B.T.

JAPAN

30p 77p

Swiftcall B.T.

USA

10p 24p

Swiftcall B.T.

Swiftcall prices apply at all times.

0800 769 0066

New phonecards available from all good newsagents. Distributors urgently required. CALL FREEPHONE 0800 769 0000 NOW.

صلى الله عليه وسلم

**Powerplay in Zaire: President's imminent departure prompts speculation as the French examine their post-colonial policy**

## Mobutu heads for Gabon and exile

Mary Braid  
Kinshasa

Mobutu Sese Seko, the beleaguered Zairean dictator, was preparing to leave his presidential residence on the banks of the Congo last night to fly to Gabon for what officials insisted was a three-day summit with neighbouring African leaders.

But it is believed France will be the President's final destination and that he is leaving Zaire, the nation he has plundered for 32 years to amass a personal fortune, for the last time.

In the next few days, Laurent Kabila, the rebel leader, is expected to take the Zairean capital, Kinshasa, in the climax to a seven-month military offensive in which he has seized with astounding ease most of the country. He has repeatedly warned President Mobutu, 66, who suffers from prostate cancer, to stand down or be removed.

Diplomats believe the President's meeting with leaders of Gabon, Congo and Togo is a face-saving device to allow him to be out of the country when Mr Kabila rolls into Kinshasa.

"If you ask me... I would say he plans to make this a transit stop on the way to France," said a Mobutu aide who did not want to give his name.

But Mr Mobutu's flight would not guarantee a bloodless coup. Government ministers claimed last night that their forces were battling to retake Kikwit, the strategic town on the road to Kinshasa recently captured by rebels. They claim to have killed hundreds of rebel soldiers. If true, it suggests that the establishment — with or without Mr Mobutu — may still be prepared to fight for Kinshasa.

At Kinshasa Airport, Mr Mobutu's unpaid and sluggish soldiers were feeling the heat yesterday. They argued and shrugged in the dilapidated car park while younger skinny recruits in threadbare fatigues begged for dollars. As the rebels advance, the army becomes more edgy. But ordinary people — most of whom are desperately poor — were delighted to hear of Mr Mobutu's trip.

"I want Kabila to come," said Etienne, 35, a waiter in the VIP suite at the airport. He spent the week watching Mr Mobutu's cronies scuttle into exile dragging heavy cases.

Kabila has proved a strong man in a country where strong men are admired. But Vincent, a middle-aged Emigration Officer, is worried. Kinshasa, he says, will not fall without bloodshed and he still hoped for a political deal. The rebels, he warned, may not be Zaire's salvation. "They have killed refugees in the east and that is very bad. What we need is an election and though Kabila is popular Etienne Tshisekedi [the leading opposition figure] is still the most popular politician here."



The long search: Rwandan Hutu refugees scan a notice board showing pictures of unaccompanied children at a transit camp near Kisangani, in Zaire

Photograph/AP

## France loses its influence in Africa

John Lichfield  
Paris

Is President Mobutu's ignominious departure a mortal blow for French policy in Africa? Perhaps more accurately, it is a demonstration that the traditional French post-colonial approach to Africa — a kind of Machiavellian clientelism — is already dead.

The collapse of the Mobutu regime may even bring bitter comfort to some in Paris — including the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé — who have long argued that it is time, in the interests of France and Africa, to adopt a fresh policy.

For nearly 50 years, France was acknowledged as the ultimate power-broker in Francophone Africa, initially in its own former colonies, and then, from the 1970s onwards, in the former Belgian possessions of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi.

At the weekend, Zaire's fate was negotiated aboard a South African warship by an American diplomat. The French ambassador to the neighbouring Congo, was allowed aboard but, according to the newspaper *Liberation* was asked to "stay at the bar".

In the end, Mr Mobutu seems to have realised the limitations of French power. The President-for-life did not even inform the French government last week that he had decided, in principle, to give up office. Paris learnt of his intentions by reading the *New York Times*.

The Africanist old-guard in Paris, which has been running virtually a parallel foreign policy since President Jacques Chirac came to power two years ago, tried to prop up Mr Mobutu until the end. There is evidence that they connived in January in a desultory attempt to put to-

gether a mercenary defence force against Laurent Kabila's rebels.

A French businessman who helped to set up a rag-tag force of 80, mainly Serbian, mercenaries, and three aircraft, does appear to have been linked to the President's special African adviser, Fernand Wibaux. But diplomats in Paris believe that Mr Wibaux was acting without the backing of the Prime Minister and Foreign Ministry and even against the wishes of the President's chief-of-staff, Dominique Villepin, who is nominally in charge of Africa policy at the Elysée palace.

Overall, it appears that the old African hands were acting from a stubborn instinct to meddle, rather than in any real hope of preserving the Zairean status quo. The minute scale of the operation — and its abject

failure — are, in themselves, evidence that an era of French-African relations is over.

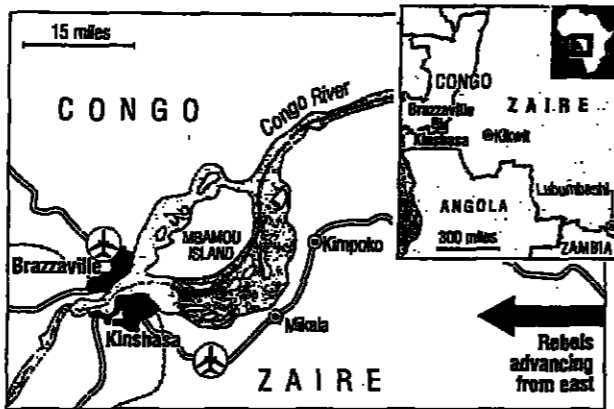
Much of the commentary in the French press, and by French politicians, has portrayed events in Zaire over the last six months as a triumph for a deliberate American strategy to destroy French influence in Africa.

There is some evidence that the United States provided logistical and material support for Mr Kabila. No doubt the US has its own reasons for doing so: Zaire is a richly-endowed country. But President Mobutu, during the Cold War, was as much an American client as a French one. US policy, if coherent at all, was as much driven by a belated recognition that Zaire, under Mobutu, was a corrupt and disintegrating basket case. Belgium also had ceased to support the ruler of its former colony.

Only France continued to

champion him to the end, locked into a habit of supporting the "big men" of Francophone Africa, in return for economic advantage, but more importantly, because of a kind of amorphous addiction to political and linguistic influence on the continent. In truth, France gained less economic advantage from Zaire than Belgium or the United States.

In essence, French complaints that the US is driving events in Africa miss a crucial point. The events may be influenced by Washington, but they are being driven mostly by Africans. No amount of US aid could have produced such a rapid rebel advance across Zaire unless it was supported by Zaireans. On the other hand, without the tacit US support Paris received during the Cold War, the old French policy of unconditional support for client African dictators is defunct.



A flash of inspiration... The sizzle of fresh electricity... It's the dawn of a new computer era — the first no-compromise PC — powered by the Intel Pentium® II processor has arrived!

For months we've been working with Intel to take the world to the next level of computing. By adding MMX™ media enhancement instructions to their most powerful processors ever, the heart-stopping Intel Pentium II processor was created! Beyond the immediate effects of increased power and technology, you'll also enjoy software compatibility well into the future.

The Intel Pentium II processor is the "brain" of our new feature-rich system line. Excellent for the power-hungry user at work or play, we've designed our systems to give maximum power and performance. The limits of this PC will be decided only by your imagination.

Maybe your needs are simple — a multimedia machine that pushes the power envelope. Your quest will end once you check out the Gateway 2000® G6-266XL. Not only is it our top-of-the-line power-wise, the G6-266XL also comes with a three-piece Boston Acoustics® speaker set. The sound from these PC speakers will rival that of your home stereo!

And to make sure you get THE system you've been dreaming about — we'll let you custom configure your PC. All of this and it's affordable — direct from Gateway 2000.

Don't wait any longer — the computer you've been yearning for is finally here! Give Gateway 2000 a call today!

- G6-266XL**
- Intel 266MHz Pentium® II Processor
  - 64MB EDO RAM, 512K Ultra Fast L2 Cache
  - 3.5" Floppy Disk Drive
  - Iomega Internal Zip Drive
  - Mitsumi 12-16X (min-max) CD-ROM
  - Quantum® 6.4GB EIDE Hard Drive
  - Ensoniq® PCI WaveTable Soundcard
  - Boston Acoustics® Multimedia Speakers with Subwoofer
  - STB® VIRGE 3D Graphics Accelerator, 4MB EDO RAM
  - Zyxel Omni.net ISDN External Terminal Adapter
  - 17" CrystalScan® Colour Monitor
  - ATX Tower Case
  - Microsoft® Windows® 95 105 Keyboard
  - MS® Windows 95, MS IntelliMouse
  - MS Office 97 Small Business Edition Plus
  - Internet Software Bundle
- £2249 (2676.65 inc. VAT & Delivery)**

Give Gateway 2000 a call today or drop in to the Gateway 2000 Showroom, 10 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9HE.

You'll be glad you did!

Showroom Hours of Business:  
12:30 pm – 6:30 pm Mondays  
9:30 am – 6:30 pm Tuesday – Friday  
10:00 am – 4:00 pm Saturdays  
Closed Sunday and Bank Holidays

FLEXIBLE BUSINESS  
FINANCE OPTION.  
CALL FOR DETAILS

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."  
0800 39 2000  
http://www.gw2k.co.uk

MMX  
intel  
inside  
pentium® II

Gateway 2000, Clonsilla Industrial Estate, Dublin 17, Ireland.

All configurations and prices are subject to change without notice or obligation. ©1997 Gateway 2000 Corporation. All rights reserved. "It's Alive" is a trademark of Gateway 2000 Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Gateway 2000, the Intel Inside Logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and MMX is a trademark of Intel Corporation. All other brands and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. All prices quoted in Sterling. All sales subject to Gateway 2000 Corporation's standard terms and conditions of sale. Delivery standard practice is by airfreight. Standard warranty is 3 years. Actual warranty details to appear. L.T. Inc.

"They saved me  
£10.20  
a month on  
my home  
insurance.

And saved  
me phoning  
anyone  
else."

Midland Direct could save you a lot of time and money. Some of our customers have saved up to 30%. And you could save even more through our range of special discounts — call us now on the number below.

Phone lines are open 8am-8pm  
Monday-Friday (excluding public holidays)  
and 10am-2pm Saturday.



Midland Bank  
Member HSBC Group

CALL FREE

0800 277 377

Issued by Midland Bank plc.  
Calls may be monitored or recorded for quality purposes.

## international

## Cook launches mission to make fresh start with Europe

Rupert Cornwell

Taking the reins of his new job swiftly and firmly in hand, Robin Cook is planning an unprecedented "Mission Statement" to Britain's diplomats next week, aimed at motivating his staff and setting out the new foreign policy priorities of the Blair government.

After four hectic days of meetings and briefings in London, the first Labour Foreign Secretary in 18 years today makes his first foray into Europe, with brief visits to Paris and Bonn. He will hold talks with his French and German opposite numbers, as well as Lionel Jospin and Oskar Lafontaine, the leaders of the two countries' socialist opposition parties,

ahead of a special meeting of European foreign ministers in Brussels in a fortnight.

Mr Cook will project Britain's desire for a new start in relations with Europe, soured by years of stonewalling from the Conservatives. His long-desired message to foreign ministers Hervé de Charette and Klaus Kinkel will be that the new

Labour administration is ready to be more flexible over matters such as majority voting and a greater role for the Strasbourg parliament.

"A change in tone and some change in substance," was how officials described the new approach.

The trip to France and Germany raises the curtain on a bone-breaking schedule for Mr Cook over the

next seven weeks of summits and ministerial meetings involving the EU, Nato, G-7, the WEU and the OECD. It will be capped by the Hong Kong handover ceremony at the end of June. In between he hopes to visit Washington.

A first unveiling of how Labour intends to run foreign policy comes next week with a personal address by

the Foreign Secretary to his staff. Then a film of Mr Cook setting forth his goals will be made by Sir David Putnam, to be sent to British missions around the world.

Mr Cook wants greater representation of women and ethnic minorities at senior diplomatic levels and greater openness to the media. He will place new emphasis on

global environmental issues, the revitalization of the UN and human rights. Measures may well include strict curbs on arms exports to offending regimes. Nigeria and Burma are obvious candidates. On arms control and a new round of reductions in nuclear weapons, a Labour government also may be much more activist than its Tory predecessor.

## Asia puts military wares on display

Singapore — One of the many remarkable things about Singapore is that, despite its position at the heart of one of the most colourful continents, it makes South-East Asia feel like a calm and orderly place.

Here, chewing gum is a controlled substance, crossing the road off a zebra crossing can land you a \$400 fine, and the streets are so clean that you could eat your dinner off them.

But this week, Singapore is hosting an event based upon the opposite assumption: that Asia is an increasingly vulnerable region, a continent of territorial rivalries and escalating military expansion.

The event is known as Imdex Asia '97 (for International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference), a four-day event involving 300 companies from 18 countries, and thousands of visiting diplomats, defence procurement officials, serving officers and journalists.

Ten battle ships, from small attack craft from Brunei to the mighty British aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*, are moored in Singapore in support of their national industries. The exhibiting companies have paid as much as £80,000 to set up their stands at the biggest in a growing number of regional arms fairs which now regularly take place in Korea, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

They owe their existence to a striking shift in military spending patterns: since the end of the Cold War brought drastic cutbacks in defence budgets in Europe and America, Asia is virtually the only place in the world where defence procurement budgets are consistently on the rise. The reasons for this were outlined by speakers at the

**Richard Lloyd Parry reports on arms firms cashing in on regional rivalries**

exhibition and an associated conference on the theme "Protection of the Seaways".

With the end of the superpower rivalry, regional states are increasingly having to take responsibility for their own security against a variety of threats and destabilising influences in one of the most strategically crucial areas in the world. The dramatic economic growth of the South-East Asian countries over the past 15 years has made the security of its sea lanes more important than ever.

If the graphs climb at anticipated rates then, by 2010, one-third of the world's production will take place in East Asia.

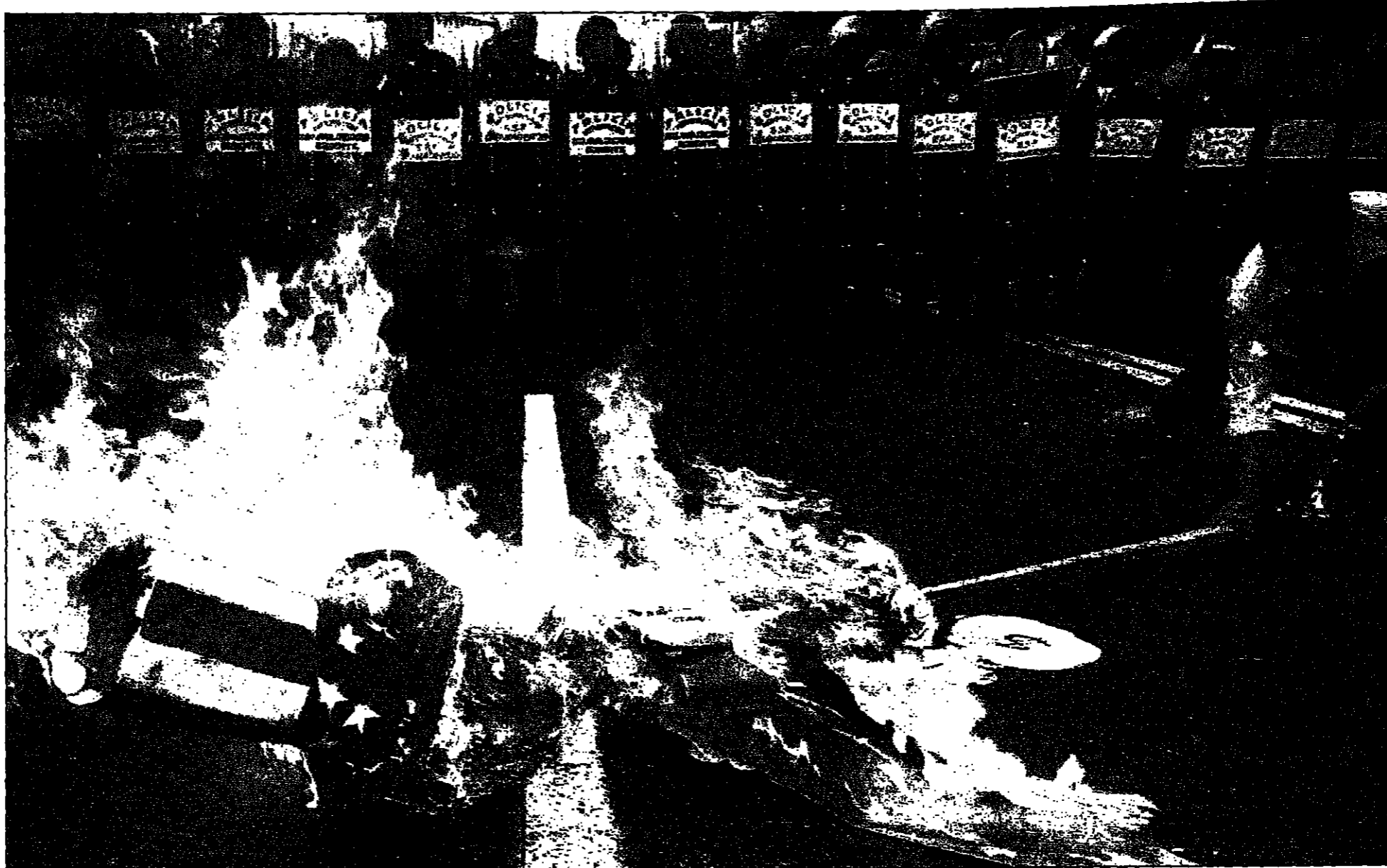
Already the Malacca Straits, the narrow waters which divide the Indonesian island of Sumatra from Malaysia and Singapore, carry more ships every day than the Panama and Suez canals put together.

By far the largest number of cases of piracy (71 out of 94 world-wide in 1994) take place in Asia — but more disturbing by far are the flash points developing between nation states.

A striking number of these focus on islands. Yesterday, the Chinese foreign ministry protested after the latest in a series of visits by Japanese nationalists to a group of islands variously called the Diaoyu and the Senkaku and claimed by Tokyo, Peking and Taipei.

Last week, China and the Philippines renewed their claims to the even more embattled Spratly Islands — which are believed to contain fuel deposits and, which are also claimed by Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

But the region's principal source of tension is China, which over the past 30 years has raised the status of its navy to the most senior of the three services. China's ambitions to establish a continental "blue water" fleet by 2020 have stimulated an arms boom among the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean).



Fired up: A demonstrator in Mexico City burning an effigy of Uncle Sam in protest at President Clinton's visit for talks yesterday with President Zedillo. The Mexican president described Mr Clinton as a "good friend" to the country in an attempt to address concerns that US actions on trade and drug trafficking undermine national integrity. Photograph: AP

## Doubts emerge over US 'balanced budget'

Chorus of criticism dampens initial euphoria. Mary Dejevsky reports

When President Clinton and Republican leaders reached their eleventh hour agreement on a budget plan late last week, there was prime-time televised euphoria on both sides.

Mr Clinton broke into a visit to Baltimore to rehearse the benefits of the deal to the media, while Newt Gingrich, Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, the Senate majority leader, beamed and enthused their way through a special press conference at the Capitol.

For Mr Clinton, the chief victory lay in salvaging the Democrats' promised spending plans, including his own election promise to extend medical insurance to the country's 5 million uninsured children. Mr Gingrich's chief claim was to have "completed" his Contract for America — the government-cutting, tax-cutting agenda on which the Republicans took control of Congress three years ago. For Mr Lott, the key was to have reached the objective of a balanced budget "by cutting spending not by raising taxes".

Less than a week later, however, the five-year deal to balance the budget for the first time

in three decades is looking considerably less substantial than it did at the outset.

There is criticism from the tax-cutting right of the Republican party, hesitation from sections of the Democratic left and a general public scepticism about the feasibility of balancing the budget at all. One poll over the weekend had fewer than 20 per cent agreeing with the proposition that the deficit would be eliminated by 2002.

Some of the most qualified criticism has come from Republican Senator, Phil Gramm, a disappointed tax-cutter who has been filling the airwaves to denounce the agreement. Likening himself variously to "a skunk at the garden party" or "Horatius keeping the bridge", Mr Gramm warns that the terms of the deal may raise the deficit rather than cutting it.

While Mr Clinton has spoken of "steadily declining deficits" over the five years of the agreement, Mr Gramm and his allies ask: "What five-year agreement?" What price the continuation of the agreement if the

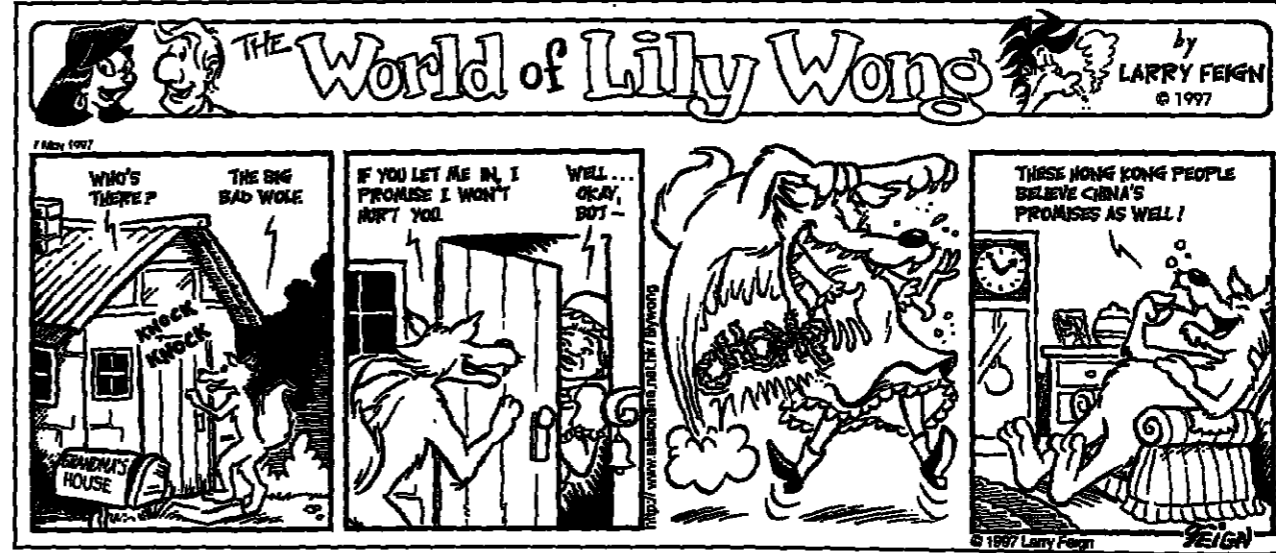
Democrats win a majority in the House of Representatives next year, or after the next presidential election in 2000? They claim that the deal is "back-loaded", so that the spending increases are concentrated in the next two years, while the tax-cutting provisions are concentrated in the last two years.

If the economics of the balanced budget by 2002 may be questionable, the politics are not. As constructed, the deal allows Mr Clinton to banish the popular image of the Democrats as an irresponsible party of spending, while allowing the Re-

publicans to shed their image of heartlessness. As one right-wing commentator said ruefully, the "balanced budget" deal was one that neither party could have steered through Congress alone — but with Mr Clinton and Republican leaders acting together.

er, it was almost certain to be passed — even though the details have yet to be hammered out.

In the conciliatory tone of one who recognises a political victory when he sees one, the White House spokesman, Mike McCurry, said of the deal: "We can't govern in an environment in which the Democrats, who are a minority in the Congress, can get everything they want."



AA

JOIN NOW FROM  
JUST £40

To join, call free now on  
0800 444 445

and ask for extension 6772.  
Immediate cover available.

APRICOT VS550 INTEL 200MHz PENTIUM® PROCESSOR WITH MMX™ TECHNOLOGY.

**THE POWER BARRIER.  
THE PRICE BARRIER.**  
MITSUBISHI BREAKS THROUGH BOTH.

Once again, Mitsubishi Electric sets the pace. Intel's latest 200MHz Pentium processor with MMX™ technology is going to be fast in any system. (up to 20% faster across all applications, and up to 60% faster\* on MMX enabled applications, than the equivalent Pentium Processor without MMX). But married to the Apricot motherboard we developed to optimise its potential, the performance is nothing short of blistering.

As you'd also expect from one of the world's largest IT corporations, Mitsubishi's investment in quality extends to every component of the system: from the 15" Mitsubishi DiamondScan monitor, to using the best integrated ATI graphics.

And rather than hamstringing a brilliant processor with inadequate RAM just to create an eye-catching price (as so many manufacturers do), we include no less than 32Mb of RAM in our price.

Consider, too, that this price is keen enough to go head-to-head with the direct-sellers, yet includes the added-value of service and support from our own nationwide network of accredited resellers.

So call us right now for details. And break through a few barriers of your own.



- ✓ Intel 200MHz Pentium Processor with MMX technology
- ✓ 32Mb RAM as standard
- ✓ High Performance 2.1Gb Quantum HDD
- ✓ Integrated 64-bit ATI graphics
- ✓ 256Kb Pipeline burst L2 cache
- ✓ DMI management features
- ✓ Windows '95
- ✓ 3 Year free warranty (1st year on-site)
- ✓ 15" Mitsubishi DiamondScan colour monitor

**0800 212 422**  
CALL NOW FOR AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Web address: <http://www.apricot.co.uk/offers/sp-offer.htm> e-mail address: [hotline@apricot.mee.com](mailto:hotline@apricot.mee.com)

The Intel Inside Logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and MMX is a trademark of Intel Corporation. Prices and specifications are correct at time of going to press. \*Intel Benchmark tests. E+OE.

MITSUBISHI

apricot

سكدا من الوصل

# Israel blamed for Lebanon booby-trap blast

Robert Fisk  
Beirut

The near-dormant ceasefire committee in southern Lebanon is to meet in emergency session this afternoon after two Lebanese construction workers were blown to pieces by a booby-trap bomb – allegedly planted by the Israelis – in the town of Nabatea.

Lebanese police officials say that a second bomb, which was dismantled by ordinance officers, was made

of components bearing Hebrew markings. Both had been constructed of glass-fibre – identical to booby-trap devices laid by Israeli soldiers at the village of Siddiqin last year.

Israel, meanwhile, has prepared its own complaint to the ceasefire committee: the wounding of four civilians inside its occupation zone by a bomb set off by Hizbollah near the village of Qla'a on Monday. The bomb had been directed at a squad of pro-Israeli militiamen from the "South Lebanon Army" which was passing

the scene in an unmarked car. Two of the SLA men were also wounded.

Although a low-level war has continued between Hizbollah and Israeli troops in southern Lebanon since last April's Israeli bombing which killed almost 200 civilians, yesterday's blast in Nabatea caused grave concern to both the Lebanese authorities and to the United Nations peacekeeping force. It was an identical glass-fibre bomb – concealed as a stone in a wall – which killed a teenage boy in southern Lebanon just over a year

ago, provoking a volley of Hizbollah rockets into Israel and, in turn, prompting Israel's bloody counter-bombardment. Claims that Israeli was behind yesterday's deaths would be easier to dismiss if the Israelis had not been caught planting glass-fibre bombs near Siddiqin on April 18th, 1996. Israeli troops later gave UN officers maps of their hidden bombs, all of which were defused by the UN and all of which were made of glass-fibre.

Hizbollah also accused Israel of responsibility yesterday, while its rival

Amal militia stated that the killings were a deliberate attempt to create unrest in advance of Pope John Paul II's visit to Lebanon at the weekend.

Lebanese newspapers have been speculating for several days that Israel might stage some form of attack to disrupt the Pope's trip, which the Lebanese government regards as the ultimate symbol that the country has emerged from its 16-year civil war. More than 20,000 Lebanese troops will be guarding the Pope during his travels across Beirut and during the

Mass which he plans to say on Sunday in the open space that marks the ruined pre-war centre of the capital. The ceasefire committee has met only once – and then for only two minutes – since the Arab League decided to break off all negotiations with Israel earlier this year. Syria's cigar-smoking delegate will be sitting opposite the Israelis at the meeting at UN headquarters at Naqoura this afternoon, along with Colonel Maher Tofaili, the Lebanese delegate who visited the scene of the

bombing in Nabatea yesterday. Under the terms of the truce, Israelis and Hizbollah may attack each other but must not hurt civilians or fire from civilian areas of southern Lebanon.

Yesterday Israeli warplanes attacked suspected Hizbollah targets in the Syrian-controlled eastern Bekaa Valley. Two jets fired four rockets into a mountainous area southwest of the town of Mashghara, just north of Israel's south Lebanon occupation zone.

## Brazil's soaps wash away the mother tongue of Portugal

Brazilian soap operas have invaded Portugal's four television channels and now reign supreme over prime-time scheduling. Of last year's top-50 programmes, 48 were soaps from Brazil. Their influence has become so strong that the Portuguese are adopting Brazilian expressions and customs in an astonishing process of cultural colonialism in reverse.

Up to eight Brazilian soap operas or telenovelas are shown every day, back to back, with a respite only for the lunchtime and evening news. By channel-hopping you can spend your entire waking hours watching them, and to judge from the ratings, many Portuguese do.

One hugely popular saga, *O rei do gado* (Cattle King) that has just finished – sending regretful sighs sweeping the nation – was seen by a record-breaking 74 per cent of television-watching Portuguese – outscoring even football, with which it frequently competed for the peak slots.

Based on Brazil's centuries-long conflict between landowners and peasants, its daily hour-long episodes tackled the issue of land reform. The climax coincided with a cross-country trek by real-life landless Brazilians who marched upon the capital Brasilia in pursuit of justice.

In Portugal, the language is becoming peppered with Brazilian soap slang, like *cafune* (caress), *fofoca* (intrigue, parti-

Elizabeth Nash watches the drama unfold as imported serials take over the life of a nation

cularly a political one), *curtir* (to have fun), or *agua com acucar* (to take things easy or describe something as honey-sweet). The expressions themselves give some idea of the soaps' content.

*Todo bem* (everything OK) is ousting the more usual *como esta?* as Portugal's way of saying hello, and the Brazilian *Esta da dar* and *Ta!* are now commonly used by Portuguese for "OK, good".

Even more remarkable are the copied gestures: one landowner character had his wrists laden with gold bracelets, which he would shake when angry. Portuguese – even without bracelets – have copied the gesture.

"Demographic studies show that Brazilian soaps are watched by all social and economic groups, including children, and by only slightly more women than men," says Manuel Fonseca, Deputy Programme Director of the private Portuguese channel, SIC, which has cornered the soap market through a preferential deal struck two years ago with Brazil's Globo television.

Globo, which owns 15 per cent of SIC, produces Brazil's glossiest and most expensive

soaps, like *Indomada* (Indomitable) about a free-thinking woman who enjoys sex with her husband, that has replaced *O rei do gado*, *Corpe e Alma* (Body and Soul), and *Anjo de Mim* (My Own Angel).

The genre has a noble lineage. The first, *Gabriela*, based on the novel by Jorge Amado, conquered Portuguese living rooms in 1975 in the heady days following the "carnation revolution" against the generals. An instant hit, it starred the actress Sonia Braga who made an international name for herself portraying Amado heroines.

Amado's entire oeuvre, with its lush settings, sensuous females, beautiful boys and scowling patriarchs, plus its profound social conscience, is quintessential soap material, to which Brazilian producers have contributed top-class actors, directors and camera operators.

"There is a big difference between Brazilian soaps and those from, say, Mexico and Venezuela which are very bad," says Mr Fonseca. Globo invests much more money in sets, writers, costumes and actors. "They are comparable to the best American soaps, like Dallas," he says. "Not Kitch at all."

But one Portuguese man confessed that he made every effort to keep away from them, "because they're addictive, you stop going out and your life just passes you by".



Heroine: Sonia Braga, who rose to fame in Brazil's early soap operas. Photograph: Scope

## significant shorts

### US army rapist jailed for 25 years

Delmar Simpson, the United States army staff sergeant convicted last week of raping six female recruits in his charge, was sentenced yesterday to 25 years in prison.

The sentence was agreed by a six-member court-martial jury after a day-long hearing in which Simpson apologised to his wife, his children, and the trainees "who believe I brought them harm", and in which his mother made an emotional plea for mercy. A psychologist testified that Simpson suffered from "a narcissistic personality disorder". Simpson insisted that all the women concerned had agreed to sex, and he is expected to appeal.

Mary Dejevsky - Washington

### Tenet makes case to lead CIA

President Bill Clinton's choice to lead the CIA into the 21st century, George Tenet, vowed yesterday to close the door on the Cold War and draw more frequently on expertise in the United States private sector. "Ultimately, leadership at this moment means... embracing the challenges and opportunities of the new era," he said in an opening statement to the Senate Intelligence Committee, which is considering his nomination.

Reuters - Washington

### Pre-dawn attack on Taliban

Anti-Taliban soldiers launched a pre-dawn offensive outside the deserted town of Jebul Siraj on the strategic Salang Highway that links Kabul to northern Afghanistan. Opposition troops made initial gains, according to the Taliban Islamic militia, but were later driven back into the mountains.

AP - Jebul Siraj

### Algiers car bomb kills two

A car bomb killed two people and wounded about 20, many of them schoolchildren, in Algiers. The bomb was in a car parked opposite the Lycée Frantz Fanon at the entrance to the crowded suburb of Bab El-Oued.

Reuters - Paris

### Post delivered 87 years late

A card mailed 87 years ago from Copenhagen, finally showed up in its intended town of Agersted, 160 miles away. The card was mailed in August 1909 to eight-year-old Ida Ahlefeldt by an aunt. It then took an unexplained detour to Russia, where it languished, and recently made its way back to Denmark, and to Johan Wetche, the nephew of Ahlefeldt, who died in 1954.

AP - Copenhagen

## NatWest Base Rate

NatWest announces that with effect from 6 May 1997 its Base Rate is increased from 6.00% to 6.25% per annum.

All facilities (including regulated consumer credit agreements) with a rate of interest linked to NatWest Base Rate will be varied accordingly.

 NatWest

National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lombury, London EC2P 2BP

## Girobank

Girobank announces that with effect from close of business on 6 May 1997 its Base Rate was increased from 6.00% to 6.25% per annum.

Girobank plc. Registered in England No. 1850000. Registered Office: 49 Park Lane, London W1Y 4EQ. A member of the Alliance & Leicester Group.

## Yorkshire Bank Base Rate

Yorkshire Bank announces that with effect from start of business on 7th May 1997 its Base Rate is increasing from 6.00% to 6.25%.

 Yorkshire Bank  
20 Market Way, Leeds LS2 9BZ, Tel: 0113 2344667

With effect from the close of business on Tuesday 6th May 1997 and until further notice, TSB Base Rate is increased from 6.0% p.a. to 6.25% p.a.

All facilities (including regulated consumer credit agreements) with a rate of interest linked to TSB Base Rate will be varied accordingly.

 We want you to say YES

TSB Bank plc, Victoria House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BZ.



## If last night's Cook Report sickened you, this is your chance to do something.

Last night ITV's 'Cook Report' exposed the damning evidence supplied by IFAW, of the horrific slaughter of wild animals in South Africa. Lions, leopards, even lionesses with cubs. All were on offer as targets for a rich man's 'kill'.

Bred in cages or illegally enticed from the Kruger National Park, dazed by drugs, they become an easy target. And there's no escape, because this hunt is a 'canned hunt' and takes place in a fenced-off private compound.

As one ex farm manager put it "it's like shooting fish in a barrel".

A shot to the body is almost always recommended, as a shot to the head would spoil the look of the trophy when mounted on the wall.

As the ex farm manager went on to say... "even when the lioness was skinned and the milk was pouring out of her teats, it didn't bother them."

But it bothers IFAW. And it bothered Roger Cook enough to expose this appalling trade in animal suffering.

If it bothers you, please send as much as you can to help IFAW buy more land where no animals will ever be killed.



I want to help IFAW save the African lions and fight cruelty to other animals world-wide.

Here is my donation of £..... (Please make cheques payable to IFAW) or debit my

Visa/Amex/Diners Club/Mastercard (Delete as applicable)

Start date .....

Expiry date .....

Name (Block capitals please).....

Address .....

Post Code.....

Send to IFAW, Section 18, Warren Court, Park Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 2GA.

Tel: 0171 451 3500

## international

# Secret of why the Mafia has never shot a soul

In a famous comedy sketch by the Italian film director Dino Risi, a mafioso is gunned down by a passing car on the church steps of his hill-top village in Sicily. The police come running out and ask the man who shot him. "Shot?" he answers in his dying breath. "I haven't been shot. I don't know what you're talking about!"

Sicily's reputation for refusing to talk about the Mafia has long since entered popular folklore. Everyone knows about *omertà*, the mythical code of silence that envelops the island in a shroud of sinister mystery, and indeed anyone who walks unannounced into a Mafia-controlled village and starts asking direct questions is not likely to get very far.

In truth, though, the culture of silence has undergone a radical change. Gone is the time when the post-war Archbishop of Palermo, Ernesto Ruffillo, could bluntly deny the existence of the Mafia and keep a straight face (in fact he was in cahoots with some of the biggest thugs in the outfit).

The dramatic Mafia murders of the Eighties and early Nineties, and the equally dramatic mass arrests and mania trials that followed, have made the business of denial rather more delicate.

Since the first mafioso to turn state's evidence, Tommaso Buscetta, started talking in 1984, Cosa Nostra has effectively ceased to be a secret organisation.

Andrew Gumbel concludes his series with a look at the mythical code of silence

## The new MAFIA

tion: *omertà*, at least as applied to Mafia members, is a dead concept. And the word "Mafia" itself has fully entered the public domain, after decades of euphemistic references to "the friends of the friends".

But that is where the linguistic clarity ends. For reasons of fear or of deeply ingrained self-censorship, Sicilians do not willingly stick their heads above the parapet and talk about the organised crime in their midst. These days they will acknowledge the Mafia's existence, but will often try to depict it as something that does not affect them.

Strategies intended to convey this non-complicity vary. One of the most common is simply: "Don't ask me, ask someone else."

The head of the local business association in Niscemi, Giovanni Millitari, responded to a



The mob: Al Capone's St Valentine's Day massacre, as depicted in the eponymous 1967 film (above); and (right) Tommaso Buscetta on his way to trial in Palermo in 1984



question about extortion and murder in his town with the words: "Sconosco il problema." What he no doubt meant by this was: "I am not familiar with the problem," but the beautifully ambiguous formulation also means "I refuse to recognise the problem".

The snag with such a response is that it borders on outright denial, and denial is usually interpreted in the complex semantic code of the Sicilian Mafia as a veiled admission of complicity. The Mafia works best where it can work silently, refusing to talk is effectively contributing to the Mafia cause.

Another familiar strain, and a piece of pure syllogism encountered all over Italy, is: "What we have is not Cosa Nostra, therefore we do not have a Mafia problem." Cosa Nostra is

traditionally the most powerful Mafia group, concentrated in Palermo and western Sicily, and for years the two terms were synonymous.

But there are virulent Mafia cultures spreading through eastern Sicily, Calabria, Puglia, the Naples area and even the north of Italy. Strictly speaking, these other Mafias have their own names such as 'ndrangheta or Sacra Corona Unita, a technicality which intimidated or suspect citizens will willingly exploit to confound the over-inquisitive.

Or, sometimes, they might even say: "What we have is not as bad as the Mafia."

Yes, said the mayor of Niscemi, Salvatore Liardo, we have murders, drugs trafficking, a corrupt police force, extortion and armed robbery, but at least it is not the Mafia. "It is just a

problem with delinquency." This strategy is a variation on "What we have is not Cosa Nostra".

The fact that Niscemi is

**Sicilians do not willingly stick their head above the parapet**

plagued by a different Mafia phenomenon is enough to get Mayor Liardo off the hook.

Turning the issue upside down takes denial one stage further, turning bad to good: "The Mafia is actually better than what we have," some say.

A very different strategy this, the product of a mentality that believes the Mafia to be an honourable organisation at root that has been besmirched by the recent descent into random violence and insubstantial business interests such as arms and drugs trafficking.

Thus one finds the likes of Frank Zeppia, a convicted member of Cosa Nostra in the United States now confined for two years to his home town of Caltanissetta, bemoaning the outbreak of gangsterism in the surrounding area. "These guys ain't Mafia," he said, "they're pieces of shit."

And finally, the ultimate denial: "The Mafia is not Sicilian, it comes from Rome to oppress us."

Costanza, a student leader from Siracusa, explained: "The true spirit of the Sicilian Mafia

is Salvatore Giuliano, who fought for our independence by stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. The people they call mafiosi today and put in jail are no more than tools of central government. If Giuliano were alive today, there'd be no lack of Sicilians prepared to fight and die for him."

This argument stems from the very origins of the modern Mafia as a warped resistance movement against Italian unification, and reflects bubbling resentment at the excessively centralised state structure, even in Sicily which has its own reinforced regional government.

While it is true that the Rome government has been severely compromised by the Mafia in the past, it is absurd to ascribe any kind of Sicilian or mafioso purity to Giuliano, a bandit operating at the end of

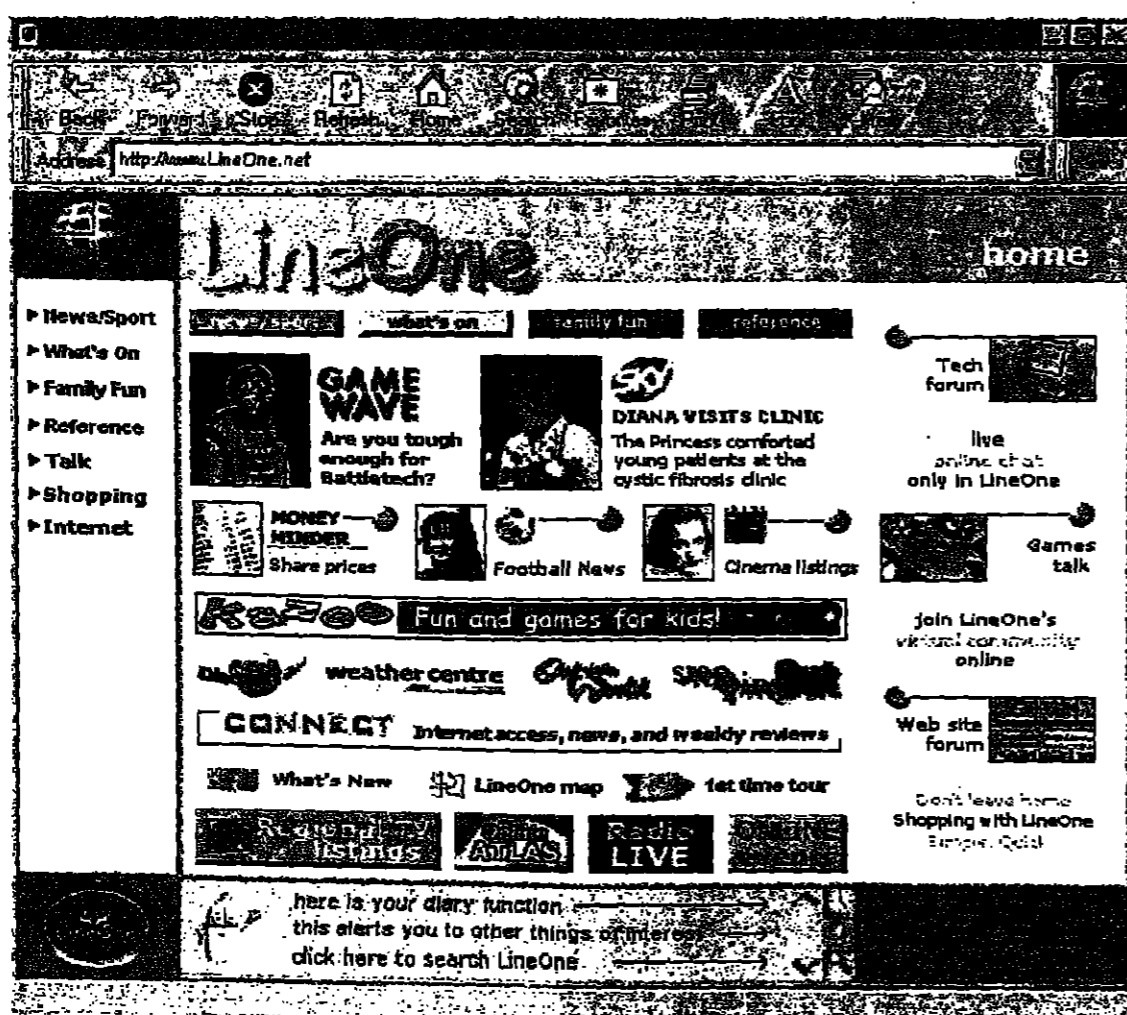
the Second World War with a glamorous reputation but who was used in turn by the independence movement, the Mafia and the Christian Democrat party to commit despicable acts before being betrayed by one of his own men.

The line does not hold for another, more profound reason. As the sociologist Diego Gambetta has argued, the Mafia does not have an ideology, a political programme or even a coherent set of rules of behaviour. It is essentially an economic phenomenon that controls territory through the sale of that double-edged commodity, protection.

That explains the continuing reticence of Sicilians about Cosa Nostra. Protect the Mafia with your silence, and you in turn will be protected. Talk carelessly and there is no telling what might happen.



## More news, more facts, more fun.



LineOne, the new UK Internet service from BT and News International, is designed just for you, but has something for everyone.

Exclusive UK content; news and sport from Sky and the UK's top newspapers, local 'What's On' listings, forums, computer games and reference information.

LineOne's unique Intelligent Agent, AJ, will show you around and help you find what you want - when you want it.

Fast and easy Internet access with BT's award-winning Internet network.

3 e-mail addresses for you and your family.

Unlimited access to LineOne and the Internet, for just £14.95 per month, so you don't have to pay by the hour.

### Try LineOne now

- One month's free membership
  - 10 hours' free access to LineOne and the Internet
- Call for your free software pack now.

0800 111 210

www.LineOne.net



مركزنا من الامم

# Something rather splendid at the Bank

Welcome to the modern world – a place we have inhabited since last Friday morning. It is a place where you talk in a civilised fashion to your European neighbours, where a Secretary of State for the Environment can think aloud about road pricing, and where a Treasury minister can tackle monetary policy in the same way as foreign countries (such as Germany and the United States of America) where interest rates are consistently lower and price stability part of the natural order.

Yesterday Gordon Brown did his bit for modernism. By freeing day-to-day decisions by the Bank of England from Treasury supervision, he also pinned price stability on the Blair government's masthead in a way which, for all their talk, Lady Thatcher's and John Major's Chancellors never managed. New Labour starts to acquire its own historic identity as the low-inflation party. (And, a bonus for a pro-European, Gordon Brown moves the British institutional set-up a good step nearer to the single currency norm.)

What the new Chancellor has done is both dramatic and banal. Dramatic because, at a stroke, he exorcises the ghosts of Montague Norman, Philip Snowden, Lord Cromer and Denis Healey. Banal, because he has done for money no more than unteamed councils have been doing for refuse collection. A public service – the pursuit of stable

prices – has been contracted out. The Bank of England gets a target for inflation and is invited to use its big gun – setting the price of money – to secure it. (A really radical Chancellor would have gone further and pegged the Governor's salary to his success; a really, really radical Chancellor would have translated the Bank to a greenfield site in Docklands and flogged Threadneedle Street at a great profit, abolishing those chaps in salmon pink kit on the way.)

What the Bank gets is freedom rather than independence. In the new model the Governor is an expert, expected to use professional discretion. There is a comparison to be made with the courts, although, unlike a judge, the Governor's decisions will affect the livelihoods of many people – their domestic finances, their job prospects. It is appropriate, therefore, that he accounts for the Bank's decisions. Gordon Brown is also turning that "he" into a collective, a Monetary Policy Committee, overlooked by a more representative Court. This reform ought usefully to allow non-City perspectives in.

That word "representative" is ambiguous. Why? Because part of the basic case for giving the Bank autonomy is that the markets trust the Bank more than elected politicians. Only bankers' decisions will command. Gordon Brown said, "the necessary confidence". By clear implication, markets

trust politicians somewhat less. All the more reason to ensure that the Bank is held publicly to account.

Gordon Brown is now free to concentrate on welfare-to-work and the next Budget. That "concentrate" could be ominous if it means he is seeking to fine-tune the economy in 1970s style – that is to say, to fiddle with taxes to secure deflation of demand. There is as yet no satisfactory agreement on both the scale of such squeezing or even its necessity. Gordon Brown will do well to avoid being pressganged into unnecessary fiscal tacking.

Much more important for the new

Chancellor is to address the fundamental question of solvency. Is this Government committed to spending plans that cannot be supported by likely revenues? Yes, the Chancellor has room for manoeuvre on borrowing. The more successful his new monetary agent the Bank of England is, the healthier look the national accounts. Likewise, the longer the upswing of the present economic cycle lasts, the more buoyant the official revenues. A few more hundreds of millions for the National Health Service budget can be lost and found with ease. But not billions – for social security, pensions,

family credit, universities, school-teachers, school buildings.

If he is to find extra money – significantly more – then he will have to raise taxes. But if the Government is true to its promise not to raise income tax rates, this means finding fiscal space among allowances, corporate taxation, indirect taxes, the taxation of wealth, council tax and so on. That there is such space is undeniable. But the political question has first to be asked: should the Government be raising taxes at all, given its pre-election promises? It is all very well to argue, as some have over the weekend, about the precise meaning of Labour's promises, but the real point is that voters will expect Messrs Brown and Blair to stick to the spirit of their tax pledge, not merely the letter. Nothing would be worse for New Labour's reputation than an attempt to smuggle in tax increases like a Colombian coke-dealer.

Yet Gordon Brown still has room. Take mortgage tax relief. No such allowance should be immune from examination of its effects. It is not needed to encourage house purchase; it does little or nothing to stop dispossession. Concealed as an element in housing policy, the case for its abolition or further restriction is strong. In other words, tax reform for the sake of the Government's social objectives strengthens the budgetary case enormously.

Gordon Brown spoke eloquently yesterday about the long term. His

reform of the Bank is a useful first step towards a permanent framework for stable growth. His Budget ought to be another – provided he keeps the future shape of a prosperous and fair Britain at the front of his mind.

## Knives (and forks) out for the Tories

As soon as the scale of their defeat became clear, it was obvious that Tory right-wingers were going to need their Granita. The word "Granita" is just becoming established in politics. It is the name of the Islington restaurant where Tony Blair and Gordon Brown agreed, over various parmesan and rocket salad-garnished nosh that Tony was top and Gordon was not. This was painful for Brown, but enabled Blair to become Labour leader, then Prime Minister. The right-wingers need a Granita because, like Blair-Brown, they can't all be leader. They need to do a deal. But Michael Howard, enticing William Hague to his Belgravia flat for a champagne compact that quickly lost its fizz, has failed to learn from New Labour. You have to do these painful deals over dinner, not a couple of drinks – and on neutral territory. It takes at least an hour and a half of munching and eyeballing and straight-talking before such things are secure.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Under PR no one gets what they voted for

Sir: Your leading article of 6 May on proportional representation suggests that the present electoral system is self-evidently "the least perfect of all" and points out that if the parties' representation was proportional to the votes cast, Labour would have 285 MPs, the Tories 201 and the Liberals 165.

In other words, there would now be a Lib-Lab or possibly, and with the help of the minor parties, a Lib-Tory government. And who would have voted for the Lib-Lab? Those who voted Labour because they believe Gordon Brown's promise that he'll keep taxes down? Or those who voted Liberal Democrat because Paddy Ashdown promised to put taxes up?

What did the Lib-Lab manifesto look like? Did you see a copy? Did any voter? And did they also see a copy of the Lib-Tory manifesto or even the Lib-Tory-Green-Referendum-Martin Bell manifesto?

The worst thing you can say about the present system is that 44.4 per cent of the voters have the government they voted for and the government which can be held accountable to the promises it made during the campaign. The worst that can be said for a government elected by PR is that nobody voted for it and that there is no set of promises to which it can be held.

First-past-the-post is, indeed, imperfect, but it is the least imperfect of all the options.  
JOHN DIAMOND  
London W12

Sir: I would like to tell Chas Loft ("Next time, can I have a vote that counts?", Letters, 3 May) not to give up hope. As he has only voted four times he is obviously a relatively young man and so has more chance to get his wish than I ever had. After voting Liberal and Liberal Democrat for 50 years, only once has my chosen candidate got into Parliament. I hoped to get a second one this time, but it wasn't to be.  
HAZEL READ  
Eastbourne, East Sussex

### End of polling booth indolence

Sir: What should be compulsory in elections is not voting but attendance at the polling booth (Letters, 5 May). One may respect the deeply-held convictions of certain religious groups who take no part in secular government, but it is quite a different matter with people who do not vote because they cannot be bothered. Those who tell canvassers, "You're all the same" or "I don't know anything/ enough about it," or "I'm not interested in politics" (ie I'm superior to you), are just avoiding the responsibility of members of society in a democratic country to choose their own government.

They would be free to put a blank paper into the box, but they ought not to be free to avoid their citizen's duty in a democratic society just because it is inconvenient to face up to their own indolence, ignorance or irresponsibility.  
COUNCILLOR MARTIN KYRLE  
Eastleigh, Hampshire

Sir: John Burridge is wrong (letter, 5 May). Voting can be made compulsory without infringing the right of the individual to make his own choice. Nevertheless, it is a pity, the ageing of the devel-



dissatisfaction by not voting.

This could be achieved by adding a simple "No Confidence" option to the ballot paper. Individuals could make a definite statement on the choices on offer without being forced to spoil their papers or stay at home.  
STEVE RUDLAND  
London SW19

### Chosen by race for the Cabinet

Sir: I note with some interest your correspondent Polly Tynbee's opinion (5 May) that all political appointments to the Cabinet should be made not on the grounds of ability but on the basis of the minister's country of origin. "Less attractive is the presence of so many Scots. They occupy a third of the Cabinet yet only 8 per cent of the population live in Scotland."

The 8 per cent she refers to should only entitle the Scots to one whole Cabinet minister and a bit of one other. Perhaps Ms Tynbee will enlighten us as to which ministers should be driven out of office on the grounds of their race.  
RICHARD PATERNON  
Bristol

Sir: Stephen Goodwin (report, 3 May) notes the "bizarre" situation facing the Conservative Party of having an MP who represents an English constituency acting as shadow Scottish Secretary. Strange – the same thing has been going on for years in Northern Ireland and no one seems to have taken a blind bit of notice.  
GABRIEL DOHERTY  
Department of History

### Keep a copy of Elgin Marbles

Sir: Would it not be possible for a copy of the Elgin Marbles to be made, to be displayed in this country, while the originals were returned to Greece? Holography and modern computer analysis should make it no more difficult than the copying of the Grinting Gibbons carvings at Hampton Court.

Making such a copy would still be a major, and very expensive, undertaking and the celebration of its achievement would to some extent compensate for the sacrifice we would have made in giving up the originals. Returning the carvings would be an act of generosity which would be appreciated all over Europe. It would be more appropriate to an outward-looking government than the rather mean-minded response of the just-appointed Heritage Secretary to the Greek appeal.  
PLIGHTMAN  
Surrey, Surrey

### Anzac Day games

Sir: Your article "Anzacs declare war on the Dirty Digger" (25 April) contains inaccuracies about News Corporation and our associated companies, Super League and Fox Studios Australia.

Your correspondent describes the Anzac Day Super League Test as an "Anzac Test". Neither the Returned Services League nor

Super League attempted to glorify footballers by comparing them to soldiers. The match took place in the evening, well after the Cenotaph memorial services.

For some 30 years Anzac Day has been less a day of solemnity than one of commemoration. Football matches at Fox Studios, race meetings and other games now feature prominently.

Your correspondent also misrepresents the action before the Supreme Court of New South Wales. This issue is between the Save the Showground for Sydney group and the NSW government. Neither Fox Studios Australia nor News Corporation is a party.

The Royal Show decided in 1988 that it would leave the site at Moore Park. The NSW government's agreement to proceed with negotiations with Fox to develop studio facilities on the site began six years later. Far from destroying the heritage of the site, the Fox Studios complex will preserve most of the existing structures.  
GERALDINE PATON  
Director, Corporate Affairs  
News Limited, Surry Hills,  
New South Wales, Australia

### Boateng's Britain

Sir: Special congratulations are due to Paul Boateng MP on his appointment as Britain's first black minister – another welcome sign that Tony Blair will govern for all Britain's people.  
NICK BENT  
Hale, Cheshire

### Purist anger over formula milk

Sir: Laudable as their aims undoubtedly are, the current divisions in the ranks of the National Childbirth Trust over sponsorship by Sainsbury's highlight the dangers of a ruthlessly purist approach to what is essentially a practical issue.

My partner and I had our first baby 10 months ago, fully intending that she should breast-feed. In the first two weeks, however, things did not go according to plan, and it took the combined efforts of a breast-feeding counsellor and formula milk from Sainsbury's to see our baby safely through those early days and on to nine months of happy breast-feeding. Now my partner has returned to full-time work, formula milk again provides the only practical way to feed our son.

The Trust should not castigate supermarkets for stocking an essential item for millions of families. Its aim should be to achieve a society in which breast-feeding is a normal, everyday activity, and not one in which women and their babies have to secrete themselves in public toilet cubicles to avoid disapproving looks. In the meantime, ironically, supermarkets (and I do not single out Sainsbury's) provide some of the most comfortable facilities for families to breast-feed outside the home.  
STEVE HICKMAN  
Wokingham,  
Berkshire

### Don't ask us to mourn for Tories

Sir: I am compelled to reply to Tristan Garel-Jones's plea for sympathy towards the routed Tories ("That's politics, but it hurts", 3 May) to explain why I find it impossible to oblige.

When my husband and I lost our business and were forced to make 25 people redundant five years ago, at the height of the Tory-led recession – funny, I don't remember Mr Garel-Jones or his friends sparing us any thoughts. We, too, had given our all to our business and our employees and then had everything we had worked for snatched away from us overnight.

Did Ken Clarke feel a pang of anything when we had to pack our belongings into a van and leave our much-loved home? I think not.

When we found ourselves, as grandparents, having reared a family responsibly and without ever being a burden to the country, suffering the ignominy of signing on and claiming Income Support, how much sympathy do you think we received from the then Government? Not a lot.

As Mr Garel-Jones says, "middle-aged, past their best, accustomed to a demanding but zany way of life" – yes we can identify with that. And, yes, it hurts like hell. We, too, had a mortgage, a son still at school and a large debt to the bank.

So, I am sure you will understand when I say I feel that justice is now being seen to be done.  
Mrs LINDA M COCKSHAW  
Salisbury

### Socratic road to political wisdom

Sir: Further to the suggestion that philosophy should be taught in schools, and to Nicolas Walter's response (letter, 5 May) that such education would reduce participation in the democratic process, a distinction needs to be drawn between possible approaches to the teaching of philosophy.

It is true that presenting to students the self-defeating scepticism of much modern philosophy would lead to the cynicism which is increasingly apparent in voting statistics. But if teachers were to return to the ancient philosophers, the effect would be the reverse: for the great philosophers of antiquity such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and Porphyry thought that their task was to address the perennial problems which beset human beings in their attempt to live the just life and to obtain happiness.

In Plato's *Republic* it is pointed out that the attractions of the life of the mind would discourage true philosophers from participating in political affairs. But Socrates has shown that a fine will be levied upon all those who have approached wisdom and will not enter politics – the fine of being ruled by ignorant men – and that will ensure that philosophers will indeed fulfil their political duty for their country.

The greatest good we could offer our school children is the confidence and encouragement to pursue wisdom.  
TIM ADDEY  
Frome, Somerset

### Old speech of New England

Sir: Serena Mackesy writes: "If we ever went to war with the States, all we'd have to do to spot their spies would be to get everyone to read out the word 'Leominster'." (In my week, 3 May). Well, she would then miss the very people whose forebears started the process of opting out of the then British Empire: the citizens of Massachusetts and other New England states.

There is a town by the name of Leominster (Leh-minster) and a Worcester (Wooster) in the state, and New Englanders laugh about the "hicks" from further west who don't know how to pronounce them.  
T M PICK  
Budapest,  
Hungary

### Manager sacked

Sir: Today's leading article (6 May) suggests that John Major spent "too much time governing and not enough campaigning". It would be nearer the mark to say that he spent too much time managing and not enough governing. And while this may have produced an economy in reasonable shape it did not produce the sense of purpose and leadership which characterise good democratic government and to which electorates respond. This directly contributed to the scale of the Conservative Party's defeat – a fact which Conservative MPs will doubtless bear in mind when selecting a successor to Mr Major.  
ANDREW CURRIE  
Tel: 0171 451 3500

## essay

# A soap-box in cyberspace

Britain has a long tradition of open-air speaking, often in the face of police harassment. Now, in the age of the sound-bite, the voice of democratic debate is muted by TV. But the spirit of the outdoor rhetorician survives on the superhighway, says Heathcote Williams

In these media-saturated times, it is hard to cast an overloaded mind back to the genteel bleakness of England in the Fifties and early Sixties. There was but one television channel – a hazy, flickering black-and-white parish pump, devoutly unifying an increasingly sedentary country with transmissions of *Come Dancing*. The finer points of human relationships were left to a flatulent soap-opera, *Crossroads*, set in a Birmingham motel; and *Panorama* would occasionally address a controversial theme with an anaesthetic pomposity.

The electronic curfew had begun. As the battery-chicken dwelling-units – the tower blocks – penetrated the heavens that no one was inclined to believe in any more, so the old communities on the ground disappeared, and the spectral pseudo-communities of the airwaves arose in their place, as if to compensate for their loss.

In Hyde Park, however, there was an alternative station: destined never to be tied to the subtle blackmail of advertisers, and free from the encroaching royalty-mongering of the BBC. On Saturday evening, all day Sunday, and Sunday night, you could surf 20 or 30 flesh-and-blood transmissions for as long as your legs would stand it, and for as long as the cardboard-flavoured tea from the pagoda-shaped tea stand would keep warming your bones.

Here were the germinative and liberating tribunes of what was shortly to become the "underground", the alternative society. The messages from this alternative parliament were avidly downloaded by incipient subversives. There simply wasn't anywhere else, or anything else like it.

The hand-cranked broadcasts took place on a windswept piece of tarmac at the end of the plutocratic purlieus of Park Lane. The programme planners were no more than the muses of human inspiration – encouraging the raw articulation of anyone who felt like standing on a battered tea-chest, an overturned bucket, or, occasionally, a customised stand to air their views and to let them

run the gauntlet in a grass-roots ratings war between rival speakers.

The speakers had to be resilient, and physically fit. They could be attacked, sometimes hurled from the platform; they were half drowned out by traffic noise; and at each deep oratorical inhalation they took in volumes of lead-polluted fumes.

They were constrained by the Hyde Park bye-laws from collecting money in the park, so that those who depended upon speaking for a livelihood were starved out; and they all had to suffer the officious scrutiny of the police in case their speeches contained seditious or blasphemous material. Even the most mildly disrespectful reference to a member of the Royal Family could result in immediate arrest and confinement in the special police station that served Speakers' Corner.

The Royals were still an untouchable totem in a deeply class-ridden society. Hyde Park was officially a "royal park", and it most particularly offended the powers that be to have the Royals insulted there. This was the archaic reason invariably given by Marylebone magistrates as to why collections could not be taken in Hyde Park. The offence of an itinerant wordsmith, who was vulgar enough to ask for a donation at the end of a meeting, was construed as the form of lese-majesté. Had he not subversively sung for his doubtless subversive supper not a stone's throw from the alienating splendour of Buckingham Palace, whose cosseted inhabitants would be dining in comfort, secure in the knowledge that the Royal Parks police were arresting anyone unwise enough to beg on the Royals' patch.

All these strictures, as Stephen Coleman points out in his engrossing new book, *Silted Tongues*, were echoes of ancient and much more extreme injunctions against free speech in a mandarinate society – a society that thought freedom of speech might happily be permitted to adorn the port-stained lips of gentlemen in their clubs, but should be watered down for the man in the street, in case it proved a more pro-active blessing.

In December 1656, the House of Commons debated for several days whether or not to bore a hole through the tongue of the pacifist Quaker James Naytor. They decided to do so and then had it done. It was disclosed that Naytor's voluble tongue had been unrestrained enough to preach that "God was against the covetous cruel oppressors who grind the faces of the poor and needy", and it had been seditious enough to proclaim that God, the celestial democrat, had "made all men of one mould and one blood to dwell on the face of the earth".

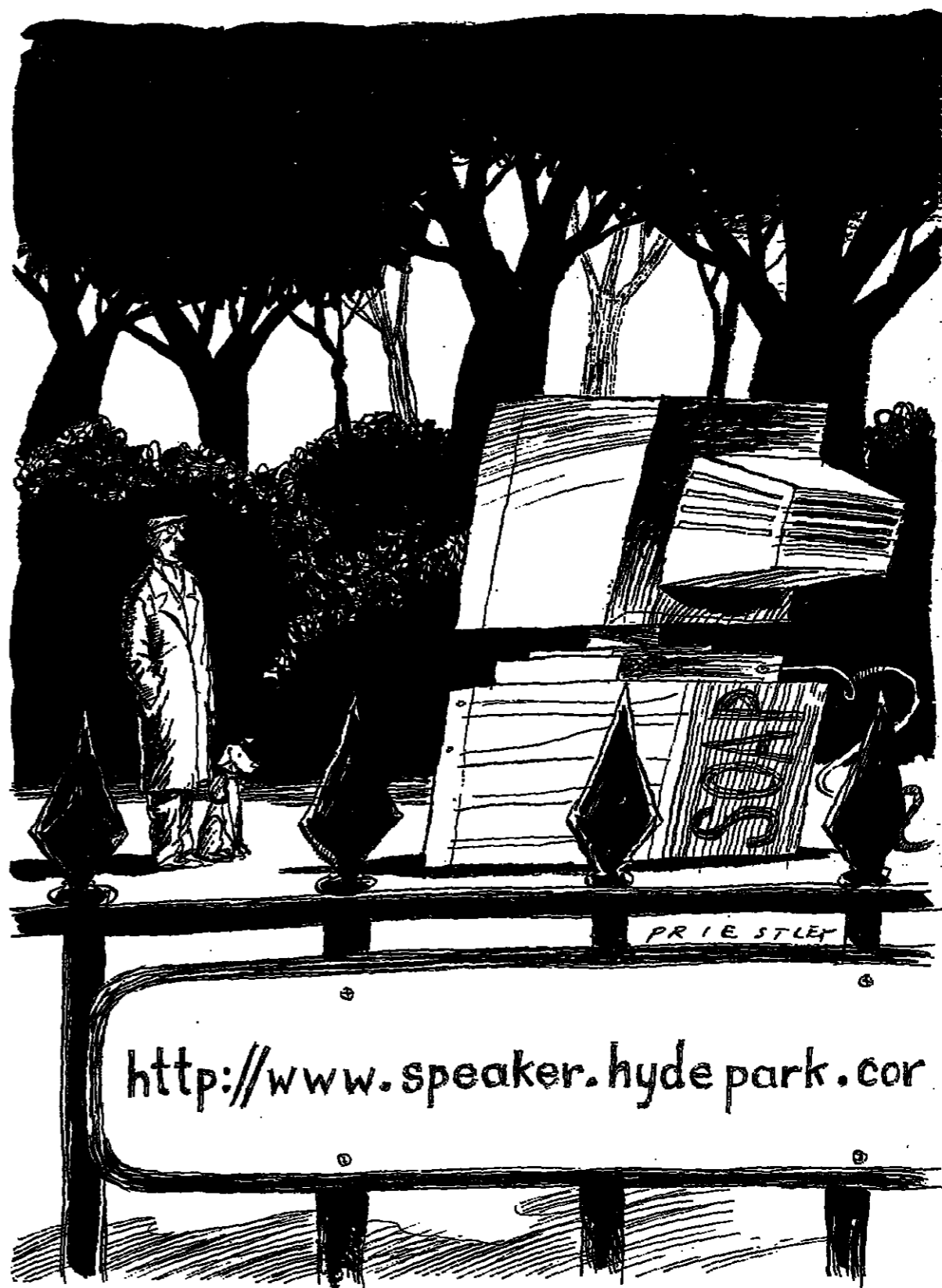
At present, when freedom of speech has become a commodity in the gift of media monopolies, it is forgotten how great the contribution of open-air speaking has been to extending the "limits of the expressible", in Chomsky's phrase.

The outdoor rhetorician may nowadays be seen as risibly anachronistic: the idea of carrying a hefty and unmanageable speaker's platform – replete with steps and display panel – on and off a bus, on and off the Tube, ill contrasts with the cosiness of a hospitality suite in a studio, where the interviewee may field-test his latest sound-bite with a pampering make-up artist, unlikely to heckle, and whose powder and make-up brushes are less threatening than the night-sticks of the police prowling the park on the look-out for the trigger-words of sedition.

It is of course much neater and much tidier to have people who may wish to give vent to anything disturbing boxed up in a cube, like Damien Hirst's sheep. Disembodied, nipped away inside what is, after all, only a piece of inanimate furniture that people have got into the habit of staring at, or even worshipping as if it were a techno-Shinto shrine. But there is no interaction. You cannot heckle a goldfish bowl.

William Morris regarded the outdoor meeting as being of paramount value in communicating opinion, and deeply resented the bourgeois fetish of tidiness, so obsequiously enforced by the police. He commented on their "arrogant petty tyranny" and decried the fact that, "They would clear the streets of costermongers, organs, processions and lecturers of all kinds, and make them a sort of decent prison corridors, with people just trudging to and from their work."

Now, thanks to a demonic consumerism, the street as meeting place, the street as open university, the street as festival, are all brushed aside once more in deference to the monocultural street reduced to an extended assembly-line for conspicuous consumption. The street is transmuted and conquered by the automobile, whose pollution of the body politic is much more lethal than the exhortations of even the most mis-



guided street "lecturer" who ever threatened the Queen's peace.

The traffic of the mind that took place on numberless street corners has been supplanted, squeezed out of existence by the upholstered traffic of impervious people in cocooned and carcinogenic pods, who watch *Friends* and *Neighbours* but do not know who lives next door.

"Reclaim the streets", of course, valiantly embraces this tradition in defiance of the "arrogant petty tyranny" as embodied in the Criminal Justice Act, and the neutering of public gatherings. None the less, it requires a considerable leap of the imagination to visualise London as it was between the wars, in the days of the great anarchist speaker, Bonar Thompson. Sean O'Casey's protégé.

These were the venues available for an itinerant speaker, such as Bonar Thompson: Highbury Corn, Fitzbury Park, Broxwell Park, Victoria Park, Beckham Rye, Clapham Common, Parliament Hill Fields, Jack Straw's Castle, Hampstead, the World's End, Chelsea, Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green, Beresford Square, Woolwich, Golden Square, Soho, Catherine Street, Croydon, and Howland Street, off Tottenham Court Road, in addition to Tower Hill and Marble Arch. There were legions more throughout the country: the Bull Ring in Birmingham, Glasgow Green, Bigg Market in Newcastle, to name but a few.

Michael Foot declared himself an "addict" of Bonar Thompson, and "in the midst of the strident ideological confusions which abounded in the 1930s," he came to believe that "Bonar Thomp-

son's scepticism was, I suppose, the sanest thing in the land."

Thompson's pacifist war cry was: "Half the misery in the world is caused by ignorance. The other half is caused by knowledge." He was a fierce opponent of militarism and would say, with provocative relish, immediately after the First World War: "When a monarch, or president, or premier or other national leader announces that he will fight to the death, he is generally in dead earnest. He is referring, of course, not to his own death, but yours."

Donald Soper, still speaking at the age of 94, took up the pacifist cudgels in the Second World War, courageously enduring the bear-baiting of uniformed soldiers on leave. (On one occasion, in mid-sentence, the Bible was blown out of his hand by the blast from an incendiary bomb.)

Coleman conveys a sense that these men and women, rather than just blowing in the wind, were fine-tuning the cogs and balances of social cohesion – and in the majority of cases they were doing it for free (unlike the grasping TV gurus and guru-ettes of push-button lala-land). His freelance orators revitalised the *Zeitgeist* with their insights – they were often martyred for so doing – and because what they were saying was spontaneous and impassioned, it remained in the mind for far, far longer, giving the audience the feeling that they were present at a unique and unrepeatable event. They couldn't catch it again on video.

Hyde Park was, and is, man speaking in tongues, speaking in the wilderness; the Sermon on the Mount, the trickster,

the fanatic, the holy fool. By contrast the Palace of Westminster is the democratic Vatican. Both strands are of equal importance but there have been 18 years of viral attack on the communities. All hands are required on deck.

Dr Stephen Coleman is the director of the Hansard Scholars programme at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Not unfluently by his own background as a long-term observer of Hyde Park in action, he is now instrumental, with others, in bringing "armchair mavericks and eccentric ideologues", and anyone else who cares to participate, out into the open through "UK Citizens On-Line Democracy" (<http://www.democracy.org.uk>), which is, in effect, a virtual People's Parliament, where the rough and tumble of the hustings can be incorporated in cyberspace, and where those old, urgent voices long stilled by vehicle traffic, may be heard once more on the information superhighway – a virtual parliament, which could, if accessible enough, turn into an ongoing deliberative democracy broadening "public space" to night-on infinite proportions.

Elitists and dyed-in-the-wool Ludites alike will be aghast; but, if nothing else, the great Web differs from Cobbett's great Wen in that it remains mercifully, anarchically, and perhaps even utopically unresponsive to the devilish talons of the media moguls who have all been obliged to retreat from cyberspace, their greedy claws blunted by frustration.

*Silted Tongues: from soapbox to soundbite* by Stephen Coleman (Porcupine Press, £8.95).

## bike for breakthrough

a sponsored bike ride to raise funds for Breakthrough Breast Cancer

1 in 12 women in the UK will develop breast cancer in their lifetime – more than 1,000 die every month.

You can help Breakthrough create the UK's first dedicated breast cancer research centre, and fund vital research by taking part in this fun day out or by making a donation.

BREAKTHROUGH BREAST CANCER

Breakthrough Breast Cancer is a registered charity

For registration details or to make a donation call 0171 405 5111

## Snow in May? Just go with the flow

It is about 5am, on Tuesday. I have woken up early, for some inexplicable reason. But I never wake up early. So why have I woken up early on 6 May at 5am?

No matter. To get myself back to sleep, I try to think of something to worry about. And for some reason I think of my son's project at school. This term his class is doing "rivers" as their project. They are learning all they can about rivers, and how these vast bodies of water begin life as small springs in the mountains and end up as major sources of the salaries of directors of water companies...

As we live beside a River Avon, I feel my nine-year-old may already know something about rivers, so I asked him the other day what he knew about the River Avon.

He said he knew that Avon was the Welsh word for river, and that River Avon just means "River River", which was pretty impressive, until I realised that he got this from me and that it is the only thing he knows about the River Avon, so I have tried to

increase his river knowledge by taking him to the Claverton Pumping Station. This is an installation on the Avon near Bath which pumps water 40 feet up into the Kennet and Avon Canal from the River Avon, and the extraordinary thing about the pumping station is that it uses only the force of the river to drive the pump. No other motive power – no engine, no fuel – was ever envisaged, apart from the huge water mill-wheel which to this day can be driven by the weight of water to fill the canal.

It is a wonderful sight. Even my son was quite impressed by the size of the wheel, though rather more impressed by the range of souvenirs and sweets on sale. It is at this point that a cockerel crows very close by. This explains why I have woken up, and started worrying about rivers. I have been woken by the cockerel.

But this is strange in itself, as there is no cockerel living within a mile of our home, so I go to the window to look out and to my amazement there is a jug of milk on the window sill covered in snow. In a flash I wake up. I am not at home at all. I am



Miles Kingston

staying at the West Arms at Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog in North Wales, where we have gone on Bank Holiday Monday to visit my step-mother. There is a jug of milk on the window sill because my wife likes to keep some fresh milk cool for the morning cup of tea and had put it out the night before. The milk is covered with snow because it is snowing hard. We have also come here – clever, this – to visit the nearby Pistyll Rhaiadr, which is the tallest waterfall in Britain.

Why is this clever? Because my son is doing a project on rivers.

Meanwhile, it is snowing thickly. On 6 May 1997, at 6am. When my son wakes up and sees it, he gets dressed quickly and drags me outside to have a snow fight, as if he has never seen snow before in his life. Well, he has seen snow before, on odd occasions, but there are plenty of others about that have never seen snow before. There are lambs in the field up the road who are saying to their mothers, "What is this horrible-tasting white stuff?" There is a pair of pheasants in the field looking pretty puzzled. And there is, even more oddly, a swallow sitting on the telephone line outside the West Arms, clearly saying to himself: "I left Egypt for THIS?"

It is 6 May, on a bright morning in North Wales, five months after Christmas, days after the fall of the Tory government, and I am up in my knees in snow in a field rolling a huge snowball with my son. What has gone wrong?

My son clearly thinks that nothing has gone wrong, because he forms a large snowball like a baker taking a lump of dough and aims it

somewhere in my direction and flukily hits the area between my chin and my collar.

"Now, that is very interesting, Adam," I tell him. "You see, it explains how rivers form. That snowball will melt in the warmth of my body, and it will flow down my clothes joining with other melted snowballs until it forms a small stream which will flow out on the ground and finally make its way down to the sea, and do you know what that means?"

"No," says my son. "What does it mean?" "It means you are doomed to death by snowball!" I cry, advancing on him with as many snowballs as I can hold, watched by a slightly puzzled group of sheep and pheasants.

Later we find that the track to Pistyll Rhaiadr is probably too slushy to risk, so we never do get to see the highest waterfall in Britain and go and see my step-mother instead and we learn nothing about rivers from her, but I would like to put it on record that on 6 May 1997 I had to scrape snow off a jug of milk to get a cup of tea.

سكنا من الامم

## Seize the moment or rue the day, Prime Minister

Cromwell said "You must not only strike while the iron is hot. You must also make the iron hot by striking."

The landslide that occurred last Thursday has changed more than any of us dared to imagine. The whole landscape of our politics. Britain seems a different place now. The air of expectation of change is almost tangible.

The temptation for opposition parties, as Parliament returns today, is to leave change to the Government and wait for the dust to settle. But this would be to risk losing the moment and its potential.

The Conservatives will be distracted and disabled by their internal squabbles for some time to come. But the rest of us do not have to wait for them.

In our most successful election campaign since the 1920s, the Liberal Democrats have played a key role not only in sweeping out a discredited government, but also in creating a climate for change. We must now be prepared to play our part in that change.

Our successes have given us a clear mandate to fight for investment in education and in our health service, for a new environmental agenda, democratic renewal and for a more rational, less confrontational and more honest approach to politics. These will be our priorities in the new Parliament.

Mr Blair now has the overwhelming good will of the nation behind him. And that will, too, is for change – fundamental change to the way we do things in our politics and in our society. This could be – should be – a government to match those of 1906 and 1945; one which opens the way to a great decade of reform (it cannot be done in less) to modernise the way Britain works: from our system of government, to our relations with our neighbours, to the way we organise our society and welfare system. And if that is what Mr Blair intends to make it, then the Liberal Democrats will provide critical but firm support for every step he takes in that direction.

We could start immediately by moving to a less adversarial and more constructive and rational basis for our politics in the House of Commons. If Mr Blair intends to change the way the Government behaves, then, again, we will respond by seeking to change the way the Opposition behaves, too.

This will not only improve our politics as they are. It will also prepare the way for our politics as I hope they will become.

It is not to diminish Mr Blair's achievement to note that, for all Labour's huge majority, he still enjoys the support of only 44 per cent of voting Britain. A system that can produce a landslide to sweep a government in on a minority of the vote can sweep it out on a minority of the vote, too. We will need more stable foundations than this to sustain the full decade of reform necessary to complete the modernisation of Britain.

The single most crucial decision that Labour and the Liberal Democrats have agreed to implement in this Parliament is a referendum on proportional representation. If this is won and implemented before the next election, the firm foundations will be laid for a historic period of change which begins with Parliament's return today. If not, this could just as easily be merely another bright dawn, as illusory as all those we have seen before.

It will be much easier to win the case for PR in that referendum if the co-operative politics



by Paddy Ashdown

This could be a government to modernise the way Britain works and if that is so, the Liberal Democrats will provide critical but firm support

oppose those things the Government does that we think are wrong. We will be a scourge for extra investment in education and for facing up to the crisis in the National Health Service. We will support Scottish devolution, as we have always done, but oppose Labour's damaging decision to have a second question on tax-raising powers in their referendum.

We will be implacable in protecting individual liberties against any repeat of Labour's cavalier disregard for these, in the face of the Howard Bills before the election. We will certainly expect early action to see a Bill of Rights incorporated into British law. We will press for a long-term approach and oppose short-term gimmicks, of which we saw too many during the election. We will not let Labour ignore the environment, as they did in their election campaign, and we will not hesitate to push them to get off the fence on Europe and provide them with support against their own Eurosceptics when they do.

There will be other areas where we can support them, too. For instance, we have long believed in strengthening the independence of the Bank of England in order to entrench low inflation, and we will support the Government in this now that Gordon Brown has announced his intention to implement this policy. We will support initiatives to raise education standards, while insisting that these are backed by resources.

And in some areas we should be prepared to break with convention and tradition if these stand in the way of more sensible co-operation. Constitutional reform is one clear case for such an approach. Welfare reform, Northern Ireland, and perhaps even Europe could be others.

Last Thursday's vote delivered a mandate for real change in Britain. We must keep the iron hot by striking it.

## Flash Gordon gets off to a flying start

by Donald Macintyre

Gordon Brown, like his leader, was never much interested in opposition. Since 1994, this restless, driven man has brooded about only two things – how to win the election and what to do with victory once in the Treasury. It isn't surprising, therefore, that he was ready to be Chancellor.

Even given the natural tendency of officials to say flattering things about their new masters, the most senior ones at the Treasury seem genuinely struck by how instantaneously he settled into the job.

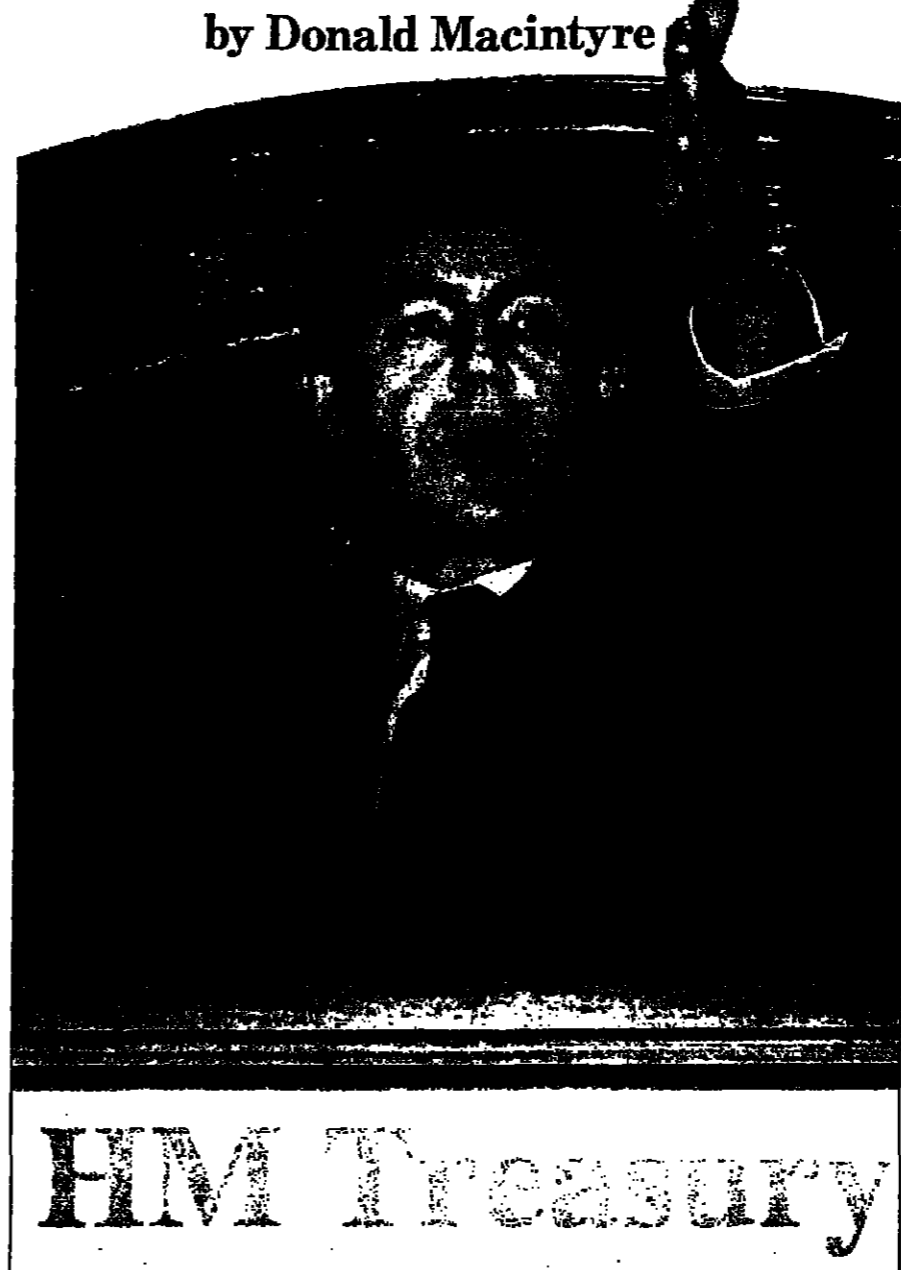
All around Whitehall, little tremors indicate the culture shock that comes with the dawn of a new era – incoming, campaign-hardened Labour fixers horrified at how few civil servants carry what they regard as the obligatory pagers and mobile telephones, newly-appointed ministers unsure of where even their departments are, let alone their new offices, the hilarious day-long quest by officials that nearly ended in appointing the obscure left-wing Scottish backbencher Brian Donohoe instead of Lord (Bernard) Donoghue as Agriculture Minister of State.

At the Treasury, therefore, it was striking how smooth – relatively – the transition was. No, here the shock was quite different. What no one had expected before polling day was that Brown would make such a difference so early.

A few days and an era ago, the most fashionable, worldly-wear complaint was that you wouldn't notice a Labour government, that it would be the same old policies without the same old faces. Brown, visibly relaxed after the dreadful tensions of a six-week election campaign, yesterday exploded that myth. We may not yet know much about the Blair government, but we can never say again that it isn't going to do anything new.

Normally, when a politician says of an institution, as the new Chancellor said yesterday of the Bank of England, that he is going to subject it "to the most radical internal reform since it was founded in 1694", it has the unconvincing ring of politician's hyperbole. Yesterday, it didn't. It would have been scarcely excessive if he had also claimed to have transformed, within five days of becoming Chancellor, more than 300 years of political economy. By taking a giant leap towards full independence of the Bank of England, Brown has abandoned, probably forever, the historic right of politicians to indulge in short-term manipulation of monetary policy.

It became almost boring in the long run-up to the general election to hear Brown settling the "Ken and Eddie" show, and holding out the distant, seemingly prospect of a restructured, quasi-independent Bank. Watching him announce that yesterday's quarter-point interest rate rise was the last to be decided by the Chancellor of



In one sweep Chancellor Gordon Brown has transformed 300 years of political economy and manipulation of the Bank of England

the Exchequer, and that from next month rates would be fixed by the Bank alone, was, by contrast, electrifying.

The steps leading to the announcement were appropriately dramatic; the meeting with the Governor was brought forward by a day because the legislation on the Bank had to be agreed at yesterday's Cabinet Committee deciding the contents of the Queen's Speech setting out the Labour programme. Such a market-sensitive decision could not be left dangerously unannounced for a day in case it leaked – though the signs are that the new Government may be rather good at keeping secrets. The move, perhaps the most far-reaching change to the economic policy-making process for half a century, was put to Treasury officials on Friday, finally agreed between Chancellor and Prime Minister at

Blair's Islington home on Sunday, agreed with the Governor on Monday, and was never leaked.

The Chancellor's announcement that he needed a quarter per cent rise to correct inflationary drift was forgivably a little more dramatic than it needed to be. It's a safe bet that his Tory predecessor, Ken Clarke, would have done the same if not this month, then certainly the next. Nor did Brown choose yesterday explicitly to criticise Clarke for resisting, over many months, the advice of the Governor to raise interest rates.

It is probable, of course, that a Conservative Chancellor would always have been given more freedom by the markets to second-guess the Bank than a Labour one. But even with Clarke, there is an irony. On the one hand, Clarke built his reputation as Chancellor in part on his ability to second-guess the Governor's caution and get away with it; on the other, he more than any of his ex-Cabinet colleagues had been prepared, in the long term, to sacrifice his rights to do that by surrendering them to the European Central Bank that will be responsible for fixing rates under a single currency.

But it has been Brown who has now handed on that right, in

the interests, as he emphasised yesterday, of the long-term battle against inflation. In the short term, it's probable that, given the Bank's instinctive tendency towards monetary prudence, there is at the very least another rates increase in the pipeline. That will not unduly worry Gordon Brown because he has never once flinched from his view that Labour has to reverse its fatal habit of courting short-term popularity and then paying for it later, as it did when the IMF were called in in 1976. This may yet have implications for fiscal policy, and for the Chancellor's first budget, as for monetary policy.

There was a fascinating exchange on April 29 between Brown and Blair, reported in the writer Robert Harris's inside account of the election campaign. It describes how press questions would be fielded on the planned July budget. Blair tells Brown: "You should say that the only reason you're holding the budget is to introduce welfare to work." Brown, reports Harris, is anxious not to commit himself. "Blair is politely insistent. Brown concedes." This is only pre-election talk, of course, but it could just be that Brown, who yesterday recommended himself unequivocally next month to reducing VAT on fuel to five per cent – also wants a balanced package including, say, the abolition of mortgage interest tax relief or some other form of revenue raising, and that Blair has yet to be persuaded that it would be wise.

In yesterday's *Independent*, the economist Gwyn Davies, who could well fill a new deputy governor post at the Bank, sounded caution against the long-term electoral damage that such tax rises could yet inflict. But there are those who believe that Brown is not as sure as Davies that such rises should be avoided.

But that's for the future. Yesterday's stroke could not have been bolder. Blair and Brown have several ways of reassuring those who believe that every economic objective will now be sacrificed to the attack on inflation. First, the remit to the Bank includes the 1944 Beveridge objective of stable growth and full employment. Second, four of the members of its monetary policy committee will be Government appointees. Third, the Bank will have to answer to the House of Commons for its decisions. At a stroke, Labour has laid a historic claim to the high ground of economic virtue. That, in its own way, is as stunning a turn round as the election result itself.

### informative:

First Direct Base Rate

With effect from 6 May 1997, First Direct Base Rate has been increased by 0.25% to 6.25% p.a.

HomeOwner Reserve

With effect from 6 May 1997, the HomeOwner Reserve rate has been increased by 0.25% to 12.50% p.a. (APR 13.0%)

First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc

Member HSBC Group

ANZ

### Base Rate

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited announces that its base rate has changed from 6% to 6.25% p.a. with effect from close of business on 6th May, 1997.

Grindlays  
private banking

PO Box 130  
London SW1Y 4LF  
Tel: 0171 451 3500

## How will Labour deal with real life?

Forget the landslide – Mr Blair's team must cope with the global changes that will affect us all

"When this election of yours is over," a Norwegian university professor has just written to me. "I hope your paper will broaden its mind a bit again... okay, of course politics matters, but it sure matters less than your current coverage indicates. Write more about gene technology, the Internet and other processes that will change the way we live. Tony Blair won't. All right: he will, a little."

It is always good to see ourselves as others see us, but I am particularly grateful to the Norwegian professor for pointing out the limits of politics at this particular time. There is such an expectation of change, and such a element of (albeit understandable) glee among Labour supporters that we need people to remind us that the election of Tony Blair will only change our lives a little.

How much depends on the extent to which he, and the people round about him, understand these big forces for change, and then whether they channel shape their policies to channel and use them, or resist and challenge them. Do you lean with the wind, or do you spit into it? Try this test. Let's list five of these forces, the processes that will change the way we live, and see to what



Hamish McRae

extent New Labour's ideas do dovetail with them.

Start with the rising power of global finance. That power has been climbing for the best part of two decades, so New Labour has had plenty of time to come to terms with it, but Gordon Brown managed to take the markets by surprise yesterday by pushing ahead more quickly than they had expected with the plan to give the Bank of England freedom to set interest rates. This is simply taking further a series of reforms started by the previous Government, and merely brings the Bank to about the middle of the independence league rather than being a bit below it. So we are catching up rather than pushing ahead. Nevertheless, it is a

clear sign that politics are going with the flow of economics. Score: Plus.

Next, take the changes taking place in the world labour market: greater competition from workers abroad, the shift towards self-employment, part-time working, job growth in smaller companies and so on. Here, the new policy is the application of the European social chapter. The changes in the labour market have undoubtedly created great social tensions, in particular the conflict between the insiders – people who have good jobs and want to keep them, and the outsiders – people who are unemployed, or underemployed and would like to do better.

The problem here is that the Government is adopting an old-fashioned social model, one invented the best part of a decade ago in a quite different economic environment, and one which has subsequently been discredited as increasing the gap between insiders and outsiders. The practical reality may be that the new Government had no option but to sign up, and it may well be that it will start to develop a more appropriate model in the coming years. But so far, the score is for a minus.

Number three is demography, the ageing of the devel-

oped world. This will lead to a series of changes in both our economies and our social attitudes. On economics, there is the obvious practical need to establish adequate pension provision as well as bringing about other changes such as making it easier for older people to do part-time work. Here, the appointment of Frank Field, perhaps the most thoughtful politician in the country on this subject, to think long-term about pensions is a clear sign that the new Government grasps the significance of the problem. Score: Plus.

Will the Government also be sensitive to the shifts in social attitudes that an older world will generate? Harder to say, but I rather think so. It may seem odd to suggest that the youngest prime minister this century will be able to act as a channel for older values, but in a way New Labour seems to represent these values better than old Tory. We will see: no score, just a point to watch.

Four – technology and in particular communications technology, for the rapid advances there will be the main impact on the world through the next five years. (Sure, biotechnology is enormously important too, but I think the practical consequences of

advances there will not be making a major impact on our lives in the next 10 years – it is the decade beyond that.)

The revolution in telecommunications is not just a result of the Internet, though that is a key part of it. It is also slashing prices of telecommunications world-wide and transferring knowledge even more rapidly across the world. There is also a surge in global TV channels, growth in international trade in on-screen white-collar services, and so on.

What do governments do about this? The short answer is "let it happen". This is an area of economic development that has to be bottom-up rather than top-down, for we can only see what will win from the market signals. The UK starts from the advantage of a liberal telecommunications regime, and that will presumably continue. Presumably, too, the general tone of the Government will be "technology-friendly". Whether it realises that this technology is immensely liberating in that people no longer need to be here, or indeed anywhere in particular, is another matter.

The location of on-screen jobs is going to be one of the great areas of economic competition over the next five years, much more important than,

say, the location of car assembly plants. Do they understand this? Do they realise that even the great on-screen money-making machine of the financial services industry could be challenged from abroad? It is not yet possible to score this one, but watch it closely.

Finally, education. More than any other single input, the quality of human capital will determine economic success – and, I guess, social success, too. But the lags are very long. Only one 40th of the workforce turns over each year, so while the key to the very long-term future may lie in the nursery schools, the key to the next decade lies in patching gaps in people's education and "retraining" us with new skills. Does New Labour grasp this, or does it still think of education in terms of schools and universities? Score? Again, we just don't know.

What we do know is that these forces will march on. The total score above is a couple of pluses, a minus, and a lot of don't knows. Our lives will, a decade from now, be very different for reasons which have nothing to do with politics. Some aspects will be worse than today, but fortunately there will still be some politicians upon whom we can – wholly unfairly – pin the blame.

## obituaries / gazette

# Professor Donald Nicholl

Donald Nicholl was one of the most widely influential of modern Christian thinkers, a teacher and writer whose words have inspired people in many countries and churches, and someone whose personal life wonderfully reflected his beliefs. But he was always a storyteller rather than a systematician.

The child of a working-class Anglican home in the West Riding, brought up in the poverty of the Depression years, Donald showed already at school an exceptional range of talents, intellectual and athletic. Almost six foot six, he was a young giant physically as well as mentally. When his teachers decided that he could best specialise in history, he sat for and won a Brackenbury scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford.

After a year there, he joined the Army and spent most of the Second World War in Asia, first in India and, finally, in Hong Kong. Asian religion already exercised a profound influence on the young infantryman at this time and helped him decide to become a Catholic – nothing less than Catholicism, perhaps, seemed able to encompass in communion the vast diversities he felt so keenly.

Returning to Oxford in 1946, he was received into the Catholic Church at Blackfriars. On taking a First, he was at once appointed to a lectureship in British History at Edinburgh from where, in 1953, he moved to Keele University, ever after his principal English home.

At that period Nicholl was struggling intellectually on two fronts: his formal responsibility in medieval history, his informal in the intellectual and spiritual crisis of Europe in the early post-war years. He travelled in France and Germany, endeavouring to act as a bridge of understanding and reconciliation, above all with German Catholics.

In this he was greatly helped by two women writers, one living and one dead. The living one, Ida Friederike Gorres, who had just published a passionate "Letter on the Church" denouncing the mediocrity of the German church and especially its clergy, became an intimate friend, while the dead one, Edith Stein, the Jewish philosopher and Carmelite nun who died in a Nazi concentration camp, became one of his chosen icons. Nicholl translated her life into English. At the same time he wrote an extremely wide-ranging and stimulating guide to all the "isms" of the modern world, entitled *Recent Thought in Focus* (1952).

On the medieval side, he made a new translation of Dante's *Monarchy* to serve the needs of students unable to read Latin before going on to write his one full-scale historical study, a life of the 12th-century Archbishop Thurstan

of York. He also learnt to read Welsh and Irish, believing that without this one could not hope to understand medieval Britain, still a somewhat unusual view among English medievalists.

Soon after *Thurstan* was published in 1964 Nicholl decided that he could not continue all his life becoming an ever more learned medievalist and switched back to the modern world, specialising particularly in the field of Russian religion. He taught himself Russian and, though for years he published little on the subject, other than a fascinating BBC lecture on Nikolai Fedorov, became ever more deeply immersed in the development of the Russian religious mind in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In the late 1960s he was invited to become a visiting professor at the Santa Cruz campus of the University of California and after a while transferred there to become through most of the 1970s Professor of both Religious Studies and History and, for three years, chair of the Religious Studies department. At Santa Cruz he added the great religions of the East – Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism – to his area of serious concern, and one of his most intriguing writings is a discussion of the problems involved in helping young American Jews understand the relationship between Judaism and Asian religion. He was always more a teacher than a pure scholar and probably the activity he enjoyed most in his Californian years was his course on *The Brothers Karamazov* open to all comers in the "Penny University" held in the Café Pergolesi at Santa Cruz.

Towards the end of his years in California, Nicholl wrote the much-admired book *Holiness* (1981) at the request of an old friend, John Todd, the founder of the religious publishers Darton, Longman & Todd. There began four extremely demanding years, 1981-85, as Rector of the Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies at Tantur, near Jerusalem, where he battled not only to help crusty academics behave decently to one another but, still more, to relate both to Palestinians and to Jews at the deep-

est human and religious level. He later described his Tantur experiences in the form of a journal, entitled *The Testing of Hearts* (1989).

After retiring from Tantur back to England and to his home near Keele, Nicholl continued a very active life as a retreat-giver, lecturer and writer. His major study *Triumphs of the Spirit in Russia*, a synthesis of many years of reflection, was finally completed last summer, just as he was diagnosed as suffering from inoperable cancer. It will be published by Darton, Longman & Todd later this month.

Nicholl was an academic who lived for his students, and a human being who lived for friendship, concerned above all to further a culture of love – a word which came back and back on his lips in his final weeks. Married to Dorothy Todd, whom he had known since childhood, in July 1947, he died just short of his golden jubilee. It proved a wonderful partnership in which Dorothy provided, wherever they might be, the homely stability he needed to balance the life of a wandering scholar.

Always a Yorkshireman at heart, Nicholl combined the strong sense of being a northern English person with a wholly international network of friends, among whom one could name Leonard Cheshire, Mother Teresa and Jean Vanier. If he lacked the practicality which characterised those three great achievers, he more than made up for it in at times almost uncanny power of perception.

Donald Nicholl spent the nine months of his final illness studying his Greek New Testament and, occasionally, taping a performance of his thoughts. When I visited him on the last Sunday of his life, he was still able to ask me in a whisper to bring him a copy of *Recent Thought in Focus* so that he could point to a moving passage from Alfred Rievaux which he had included 45 years ago in an idiosyncratic appendix on the meaning of friendship. The consistency of his pursuit of what, following Pascal, he liked to call "the knowledge of the heart", was never more clearly revealed.

Adrian Hastings

Donald Nicholl, historian and theologian: born Halifax 23 July 1923; Assistant Lecturer, Edinburgh University 1948-52; Lecturer and Reader in History, Keele University 1953-74; Professor of History 1972-74; Professor of History and Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz 1974-80; Rector, Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies, Tantur 1981-85; Senior Research Fellow, Multifaith Centre, Selby, Yorkshire, 1985-88; married 1947 Dorothy Todd (one son, four daughters); died Beitley, Staffordshire 3 May 1997.



Nicholl: 'knowledge of the heart'

## Frank Streeten

Frank Streeten rendered outstanding service to English law and made statute law revision an art form. Except for a short period as Secretary, he served in the Law Commission's statute law revision team, from 1978 as its leader, for 26 years. His meticulous legal scholarship and his sensitive understanding of English social and political history made him well fitted to this task. Five massive Statute Law (Repeals) Acts were prepared under his leadership or at his direction.

He was born Reginald Hawkins Streeten, though he was always known as Frank, into

a legal family background in Bloemfontein, South Africa, in 1928. His first degree, at Rhodes University College, Grahamstown, was in English and Classics, and he then obtained an external LLB while working as registrar to a high court judge in Cape Province. In Streeten's view, however, South Africa in 1952 was no place for someone of English descent, and he took a job as Crown Counsel in southern Rhodesia. In 1953 he was seconded to the office of the Attorney General of the ill-starred Central African Federation. His principal skills were as a leg-

islative draftsman and when the Federation collapsed in 1963 he became a parliamentary draftsman in Zambia, where for three years he had the task of simplifying the country's laws.

But Streeten saw no future for himself or his family in Africa and in 1967 he came to London to look for a job. It was England's good fortune that he spotted an advertisement for a vacancy in the newly founded Law Commission when he was enquiring about settling in British Columbia. For it was at the Law Commission, and in the field of statute law revision, that Streeten came into his own.

Repealing outworn Acts of Parliament is not an exercise to be taken on by anyone wantonly or unadvisedly. Indeed, the first time I met Streeten, we were concerned to reinstate a 1777 act which had been repealed by mistake. Connoisseurs of this unusual art form will find his imaginative solution in Section 2 of the Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1993.

In 1993, one of my first jobs as chairman of the Law Commission was to sign Streeten's last report. I did so with pride. The report recommended the repeal, in whole or in part, of over 600 Acts which had been

"identified, after detailed research and consultation, as being spent, obsolete, unnecessary or otherwise not now of practical utility". The 1677 Act which set up a judicial inquiry into "the late dreadful fire in Southwark" went that year, as did most of the Statute Law (Repeals) Act of 1972. These tests of usefulness were the tests Streeten perfected. And perfectionism in research and consultation was his watchword. I sometimes wish that some of our parliamentary masters might learn from his techniques.

His love of literature, too, was never far away. An 1887 repeal

gave him the opportunity to revisit Thackeray's description of Colonel Rawdon Crawley's sojourn into a spouting house in *Vanity Fair*. And at the final demise of the Beerhouse Act 1830, he quoted Sydney Smith's letter to John Murray: "The new Beer Bill has begun its operation. Everybody is drunk. The sovereign people are in a beastly state."

Nobody has more richly deserved appointment as CBE, which he received in 1991. When he retired in 1993, the Law Commissioners spoke of "a remarkable, perhaps unique period of public service devoted

to the simplification of the statute book". Looking back on it now, I am sure it was indeed unique.

Henry Brooke

Reginald Hawkins (Frank) Streeten, barrister: born Bloemfontein, South Africa 19 March 1928; Crown Counsel and Legal Draftsman, South Rhodesia and Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland 1952-63; called to the Bar, South Rhodesia 1959; Parliamentary Draftsman, Zambia 1964-66; Member of Legal Staff, Law Commission 1967-93; Head of Statute Law Revision, Law Commission 1978-93; Secretary 1981-82; CBE 1991; Legal Consultant to the Home Office 1994-96; married 1962 Boddie Westergren (two sons); died 4 April 1997.



Streeten: simplifying statutes

## Births, Marriages & Deaths

### BIRTHS

GORDON: To Angela and Michael, another son, Dominic Michael Francis, on 3 May. A grandson for Roy and Antoinette.

### ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Edinburgh, Hereditary Lord of the Isles, has announced that he will be visiting the United Kingdom in the summer of 1997. The Duke will be accompanied by the Duchess of Edinburgh, who will be visiting the United Kingdom in the summer of 1997. The Duke will be accompanied by the Duchess of Edinburgh, who will be visiting the United Kingdom in the summer of 1997. The Duke will be accompanied by the Duchess of Edinburgh, who will be visiting the United Kingdom in the summer of 1997.

### CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment will be changing the guard at the Queen's Guard post in Whitehall, London, on Wednesday, 7 May 1997.

### Birthdays

Mr Scobie Breasley, jockey, 82; Miss Teresa Brewer, actress, 66; Lord Briggs, historian, 76; Mr Peter Carey, writer, 54; Sir Charles Cunningham, former senior civil servant, 91; Mr Tim Collins MP, 33; Professor Alan Cuthbert, Master, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, 65; Sir Reay Geddes, former chairman, Dunlop, 85; Professor Robert Gooden, architect, 88; Sir James Groom, former deputy chairman, Medical Research Council, 73; The Right Rev Robert Halliday, former Bishop of Brechin, 65; Mr Robin Hambury-Tenison, explorer and author, 61; Mr David Hatch, former advisor to the Director-General, BBC, 58; Sir Lennox Hewitt, industrialist, 80; Lord Kirkhill, former Lord Provost of Aberdeen, 67; Mr David Leach, potter, 56; Mr Calum Macdonald MP, 41; Dr Tony O'Reilly, chairman, president and chief executive, H.J. Heinz, 61; Mr Richard O'Sullivan, actor, 53; Mr John Padovan, chairman, Motor Holdings, 59; Mrs Ruth Praver Jhaivala, writer, 70; Mr William Pybus, former chairman, AAH Holdings, 74; Mr Christopher Saunders, Headmaster, Lancing College, 57; Miss Elizabeth Söderström, soprano, 70; Mr Clive Soley MP, 58; Mr David Tomlinson, actor, 80; Sir Alan Traill, former Lord Mayor of London, 62; Maj-Gen Henry Woods, Vice Lord-Lieutenant, North Yorkshire, 73.

### Anniversaries

Births: Robert Browning, poet, 1812; Johannes Brahms, composer, 1833; Gary Cooper, actor, 1901; Maria Eva Duarte Peron, Argentinean leader, 1919; Douglas Couper, poet, 1919; landscape painter, 1840; William Hesketh Lever, first Viscount Leverhulme, soap millionaire, 1925; Max Miller, comedian, 1963. On this day the first Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, opened in London, 1663; HMS Victory, Nelson's flagship, was launched at Chatham, 1765; the qualifying age of women voters was reduced from 30 to 21 (the "Flappers' Vote"), 1928. Today is the Feast Day of St Dominic of Walsby, St John of Beverley, St Letard or Lindhard and Saints Serenarius and Serenus.

### Lectures

Tate Gallery: Jonathan Blackwood, "Developments in English Sculpture 1880-1935", 1pm. Rolls-Royce Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire: Nicola Kalinsky, "Sense and Sensibility: instinct and intellect in the portraits of Reynolds, Gainsborough and Romney", 11am.

### John Gregory

A Thanksgiving Service for the life of John Gregory will be held on Sunday 31 May at 12 noon in St James's Church, Piccadilly, London W1.

## Court's jurisdiction to order production of documents

Canadian Trust v Stolzenberg  
Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Mordue, Lord Justice Millett and Lord Justice Ward) 28 April 1997

The High Court had jurisdiction to order the production of documents which were required to establish the jurisdiction of the court to try the action.

The plaintiffs appealed against an order of Rafter J. dismissing their application for orders against third parties for the production of documents on the service of the writ to be set aside for want of jurisdiction. The plaintiffs sought to recover the proceeds of international frauds. The main proceedings were brought in England, basing the jurisdiction on the alleged domicile of the first defendant in the United Kingdom within the meaning of the Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments Act 1982 at the relevant date, which was either as the plaintiffs contended, the date of issue of the writ, or, as the

defendants contended, the date of service.

For the plaintiffs' protection, the judge agreed that service of the writ could be delayed until protective orders were in place. The defendants challenged the jurisdiction of the court, maintaining that the plaintiffs had insufficient evidence to establish the first defendant's domicile at the relevant date. The plaintiffs applied for orders against a number of banks and other bodies requiring production of copies of documents in their possession which were likely to furnish evidence of the first defendant's address at the relevant date. Christopher Carr QC and Philip Marshall (Denton Hall) for the plaintiffs; Andrew Hochhaus QC and Martin Griffiths (Richards Butler) for the second, seventh, 10th, 13th, 16th and 18th defendants; Tom Ivory (Rakissens) for

### LAW REPORT

7 May 1997

the fourth defendant; Joe Smouha (Baker & McKenzie) for the 11th defendant. The other defendants did not appear and were not represented.

Lord Justice Millett said that the question in the appeal was whether it was a proper exercise of discretion to refuse to make an order for the production of documents at an interlocutory hearing on the sole ground that they were wanted in order to establish the jurisdiction of the court. The judge had treated the matter as one of principle, not discretion. He had refused the application on the ground that, where the issue was one of jurisdiction, the court would not lend its process to a plaintiff to enable him to establish jurisdiction. That reasoning confused two different jurisdictions. One was the jurisdiction to try the action,

derived from the Brussels Convention and the Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments Act 1982. It depended on whether the first defendant was domiciled in the United Kingdom at the relevant date.

The other was the court's inherent jurisdiction to decide whether it had jurisdiction to try the issues in the action. The High Court was a court of unlimited jurisdiction. That did not mean that its jurisdiction was universal and unrestricted. It meant that, unlike inferior courts and tribunals, it had jurisdiction to decide the existence and limits of its own jurisdiction. It followed that the judge's decision should be set aside. It was not, however, appropriate for the Court of Appeal to exercise the discretion and accordingly the plaintiffs' application would be restored for hearing by the judge.

He would have to decide where the greatest risk of injustice lay, but to bear in mind that interlocutory hearings to establish the right to bring an action should not be turned into mini-trials of the action itself.

His Lordship expressed his personal disquiet at a rule, said to be a rule of our own domestic law, which made the jurisdiction of the court depend on circumstances prevailing long after what, on any realistic appraisal of the position, was the commencement of the proceedings. As the present case demonstrated, such a rule was capable of working serious injustice, and might need to be reconsidered at the highest level. In the meantime it was at least arguably incumbent on the court not to aggravate the possible injustice by withholding the assistance which it could properly give to parties seeking to establish its jurisdiction at the relevant date.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

152 من الاجل

\_\_\_\_\_

**FINSTAT** - instant PC access to Financial Times Statistical data.  
For further information, call Leanne Gilliar at FT Information  
on +44 171-825-8430 or email: [leeanne.gilliar@ft.com](mailto:leeanne.gilliar@ft.com)

**UNIT TRUST GUIDE**

# business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2096  
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

## At last, independence for the Bank

### Chancellor's move heralds cheaper long-term money

Diane Coyle  
and Nic Cincotti

Gordon Brown's snap decision to grant the Bank of England its immediate independence was greeted with amazement and delight by the financial markets yesterday.

The expected rise of a quarter point in base rates, to 6.25 per cent, added to the general City satisfaction. But home-owners will face higher mortgage costs as several big lenders increased their rates in reaction, raising the monthly cost of a home loan by about £13 for a typical £50,000 mortgage.

Share prices leapt to a new record, and the interest premium on British government debt fell by almost half a percentage point.

The Chancellor said the previous arrangements of monthly meetings between his predecessor and the Governor of the Bank of England had not generated enough confidence. "The perception that monetary policy decisions have been dominated by short-term political considerations has grown," he said.

He said the Bank would have the operational independence to set interest rates in order to achieve the inflation target. "I want British economic success to be built on the solid rock of prudent and consistent economic management, not the shifting sands of boom and bust," he said.

The FTSE 100 index climbed above 4,500 for the first time, ending nearly 64 points higher at 4,519.5. Giltsoared to their highest level for three years as the premium over German bunds declined sharply. In a less welcome response, the pound also moved higher, with the sterling index rising nearly a point to 100.6.

Most experts, in the City and outside, welcomed the Chancellor's decision. Economists said base rates might rise by more than they otherwise would in the short term, but long-term borrowing costs would be lower.

James Barty, an economist at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, said: "It's a stroke of genius. It

has caught all of us in the markets on the hop."

Michael Hughes, head of research at BZW, said: "The Government has taken an important and long overdue step towards achieving the end of stabilising the economy."

David Currie, a professor at the London Business School and Labour peer, agreed: "This is a very important break with the past."

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, was not surprisingly delighted. "We will not be distracted by political considerations. We are doing a technical job," he said.

Mr George, who revealed that he had learnt about the plan on Monday morning, said he would not have sought more

majority vote. The committee will consist of the Governor, his deputy, a new second deputy, two Bank executive directors, and four monetary experts appointed from outside the Bank.

These four will be Bank officials, although not necessarily full time. They will, however, have to give up all outside commercial interests.

The main concern City economists had about Mr Brown's move was whether these new appointments would be subject to political pressures. Simon Briscoe at Nikko Europe, said: "You could just get a range of Labour Party supporters making the judgement. That's not independence in any meaningful way."

The committee, whose membership will be announced as soon as possible, will be accountable to the Treasury Select Committee of the House of Commons. Gavyn Davies, chief economist at Goldman Sachs and considered a front-runner for the new deputy governorship, said: "This is an incentive for the Treasury committee to get better. This will be the prime form of political accountability."

The Chancellor's decision to raise interest rates on the Bank's advice yesterday, overshadowed by the more dramatic move, gained a more mixed reaction.

Mr Brown admitted that the strength of sterling meant there was a policy dilemma, and said the Government wanted a stable and competitive pound over the medium term.

Two surveys yesterday highlighted the dilemma. The monthly services indicator from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply showed further strong growth in the sector leading to higher wage costs. But a CBI industrial survey showed that manufacturers in all but one region had had to cut their prices because the exchange rate was hitting export orders.

The increase in base rates will also hit home owners. Mortgage lenders reacted within hours by increasing their rates by an average of 0.35 per cent to about 7.6 per cent.



Chancellor rings the changes: Gordon Brown at the Treasury Photograph: Edward Sykes

The move was justified by lenders as being almost inevitable after months of deliberate keeping rates down.

Andrew Pople, managing director of the retail division at Abbey National, whose tiered rates rose by a similar amount, said: "An increase in base rates had been expected for some months... and the proposed independence for the Bank may mean that further base rate changes are possible in 1997."

But Mr Pople added that he did not foresee mortgage interest rates rising on the scale of the early 1990s during the present Labour administration.

The Halifax, which also raised the cost of its mortgages by 0.35 per cent, stressed the rates increase would be welcomed by millions of savers, who outnumber borrowers seven to one.

Mike Blackburn, chief executive at the Halifax, said: "We do not believe this increase will halt

the recovery. Mortgage rates are still at a relatively low level."

Coventry Building Society also joined other lenders in raising its rates. Northern Rock stressed the 6.09 per cent variable rates from its newly launched telephone arm would remain unchanged for the moment.

Mr Brown said: "We are setting out a framework to end the boom and bust instability of recent years."

Comment, page 21

### Business chiefs welcome Brown's historic decision

Michael Harrison  
and Chris Godsmark

Business leaders yesterday welcomed Labour's historic move to grant the Bank of England independence in setting monetary policy although there was not universal support for the latest base rate rise.

Adair Turner, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, said he very much welcomed the decision describing it as "a useful move in an intelligent direction". In a statement, the employers' organisation added: "Business has pressed for month-to-month interest rate decisions to be clearly free of political influence. This move will enhance the credibility of the UK's monetary policy, and over time lower the cost of finance for industry by reducing the risk premium in UK interest rates."

The CBI said that the tightening in monetary policy represented by the quarter-point increase in interest rates was necessary against the background of strong consumer demand. However, it urged the Chancellor Gordon Brown to use his first budget to raise personal taxes, thus making further base rate rises less necessary.

"This policy mix would reduce the imbalance in fortunes at present between exporters, whose profits are being hit badly by a strong sterling and domestic service industries, where inflation pressures are increasing."

British Steel is expected to deliver a similar message to Gordon Brown later this week when it sets out its views on how to curb inflation. The company has been one of the hardest hit by the appreciation of sterling, every 10 pence rise against the German mark knocking £100m from its profits.

John Browne, chief executive of British Petroleum, the UK's largest company, echoed the feelings of many senior industrialists at the prospect of greater stability in economic policy making. "Clearly this is a good move. The track record of independent central banks in Europe is pretty good," he said.

The announcement added to Mr Brown's credibility with the

Institute of Directors, which had been less than enthusiastic about Labour before the election. Tim Melville-Ross, IoD director-general, said: "You can't accuse him of letting the grass grow under his feet." Despite the concern of IoD members dependent on the export trade Mr Melville-Ross said the interest rate rise was "about right".

He continued: "My one reservation about an independent central bank was removing all political control. But Mr Brown has answered that by having an inflation target set by Government. It's a pretty restricted freedom, though."

But exporters grappling with the strength of the pound, which has risen in value by 25 per cent over the past year, said the immediate outlook appeared even more bleak. Ironically the Engineering Employers' Federa-

**You can't  
accuse [Gordon  
Brown] of  
letting the  
grass grow  
under his feet**

tion (EEF) had written Gordon Brown yesterday morning, before the dramatic announcements, urging him to tighten economic policy through tax increases and spending cuts rather than interest rate hikes. The EEF feared that an independent bank would make the pound even stronger.

Jeremy Miller, EEF external affairs director, said: "Exchange rates are still affecting our members considerably. We'd rather he'd have taken a different measure than today's rate increase. If an independent bank makes the pound stronger then we are against it."

The House Builders' Federation attacked the rate rise, saying there was no evidence of widespread inflation in the housing market nor any serious risk of it in the immediate future.

### DTI role for Lord Hollick

Michael Harrison

Lord Hollick, chief executive of United News and Media and one of Labour's most prominent business supporters, is set to be appointed special adviser to Margaret Beckett, the new President of the Board of Trade.

The media peer has long been a close confidante of the Prime Minister Tony Blair and was one of the handful of top executives chosen to promote Labour's Business Manifesto during the election campaign.

His appointment would invite comparison with the role that

Lord Sterling, chairman of P&O, played under successive Conservative trade and industry secretaries during the 1980s. Lord Sterling acted as a special adviser to five secretaries of state between 1982 and 1990.

Lord Hollick was born in Southampton in 1945, the son of a French polisher, went to the local grammar school and joined the Labour party when he was 15. He went into the City, becoming the youngest director of Hambros Bank, before being asked to rescue a failing bank which he went on to rename MAI, the company with which he made his fortune.

Whitehall sources were stressing yesterday that Lord Hollick, whose United News and Media group owns the Express titles and the Anglia and Meridian television franchises, would not be Mrs Beckett's only adviser.

Each member of the Cabinet is expected to be allowed to appoint two political advisers. One other name mentioned as a potential special adviser to Mrs Beckett is Professor Mark Taylor, who played an important role in Mrs Beckett's inner team before the election.



Hollick: Set to be Margaret Beckett's special adviser

### Gavyn Davies is top contender for new role in monetary policy

The Chancellor's dramatic move marks the end of the 'Ken and Eddie Show' but will bring new faces into the limelight

The move, which was dubbed the most far-reaching in the Bank's 300-year history, drew the final curtain on the 'Ken and Eddie Show', as the monthly meetings between the former Chancellor Ken Clarke and the Bank's governor Eddie George were affectionately known, bringing to an end the increasingly personalised encounters that had characterised the setting of monetary policy.

The expected appointment of Gavyn Davies to the deputy governorship is part of the creation of a monetary policy committee which will comprise the governor, his two deputies and six other members. Four of the committee will be government appointments who are recognised experts in monetary policy.

Academia is well represented in the list of those being tipped for the remaining slots on the committee, with the odds shortening on David Currie, a London Business School professor and working

Labour peer, Charles Goodhart, a former Bank of England adviser who is currently a professor at the London School of Economics, Richard Portes, from the London Business School, and John Flemming, another ex-Bank man from Nuffield College, Oxford.

Runners and riders from the City include Tim Congdon, a Treasury wise person and hard-line monetarist and Paul Mortimer-Lee, chief economist at Paribas.

It is thought an industrialist is likely to feature on the committee, with Sir David Simon of BP a possibility.

The committee will meet once a month to decide whether interest rates need to be changed, using a government-set inflation rate target (currently 2.5 per cent) as a benchmark. Any changes will be announced immediately, with the minutes of the meetings released within six weeks of the meeting.

The removal of interest rate

decisions from the Chancellor marks a dramatic shift towards a fully independent central bank.

The new regime is understood to have been modelled on New Zealand's, where the central bank is also charged with meeting a government-set inflation rate target. In Europe, the French and German central banks are given a more genuinely independent remit of achieving 'price stability', which they determine.

The proposed changes end the Chancellor's monthly meetings with the governor of the Bank. Norman Lamont established that formal ritual back in October 1992 in the wake of sterling's crash out of the ERM when a commitment arose to keep to a strict inflation target which the Bank would have a part in setting.

It was Mr Clarke's innovation in 1994, soon after his appointment, which saw minutes published six weeks after each meeting, bringing interest rate policy out into the open. The meetings were peppered with sharp disagreements between the Mr Clarke and the Governor.

Tom Stevenson

### Possible shape of new monetary committee

Gavyn Davies

Hot favourite for the second deputy governorship in charge of monetary policy. Expected to take over from Eddie George as Governor in 1998. His wife is Gordon Brown's assistant. A columnist for the Independent, he would not be tempted by a lesser position because he would have to give up a lucrative partnership at Goldman Sachs.

Mervyn King

A director of the Bank of England since 1990 and chief economist since 1991. A near certainty for the new monetary committee. Won Kennedy Scholarship to Harvard before embarking on academic career. A former member of the City Capital Markets Committee and the Securities Association.

David Currie

Professor of economics at London Business School and working Labour peer (elected last year). Five years ago he became one of the first batch of Treasury 'wise men' or independent economics experts, a post he gave up two years ago. He worked at Hoare Govett before returning to academia in the 1970s.

Richard Portes

Professor of economics at London Business School (LBS) since 1995 and a director of the Centre for Economic Policy Research since 1993. Academic career taking in Yale, Oxford, Harvard and Paris. Has written books on international macroeconomic policy as well as economic transformation in Eastern Europe.

Tim Congdon

Economic adviser to Gerard A. National since 1989, a Treasury 'wise person' for the last four years and known throughout the City as a hard-line monetarist. He was on the staff of the Times 1973-76 and then went into the City, firstly as chief economist for L. Messel. Has also worked for Shearson Lehman and SSW Insurance Research.

Howard Davies

Deputy Governor of the Bank of England since 1995, tipped to head financial stability. Made headlines as director-general of the CBI 1992-95. Told the Bank of England while he was at the CBI that interest rates should be lower, fast-track careers has included stints at the Foreign Office, corporate McKinsey and the Audit Commission.

Ian Fenderleith

Executive director of the Bank of England since 1994 having first joined over 30 years ago, and with a long history of service to the Bank. He has been private secretary to the Governor, advised on the Bank's role in the 1980s and became deputy chairman last year.

Charles Goodhart

Professor of banking and finance at the London School of Economics (LSE) and a former Bank of England adviser. 1969-90. Educated at Balliol College, Oxford and Harvard before joining two years National Service. Has written numerous books on monetary theory and central banking as well as the future of the ERM.

John Flemming

Has spent most of his life studying and working in economics at Nuffield College, Oxford, and was a former Bank of England adviser. 1969-90. Educated at Balliol College, Oxford and Harvard before joining two years National Service. Has written numerous books on monetary theory and central banking as well as the future of the ERM.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low
FTSE 100	4519.30	+83.70	+1.4	4519.30	4055.80
FTSE 250	4520.20	+22.10	+0.5	4739.40	4469.40
FTSE 350	2203.30	+27.00	+1.2	2203.30	2017.90
FT Small Cap	2201.15	+5.84	+0.3	2374.20	2178.29
FT All Share	2167.26	+26.01	+1.2	2167.26	1989.78
New York	7241.78	+27.29	+0.4	7241.78	5022.94
Tokyo	20180.92	+666.17	+3.4	20180.92	17305.85
Hong Kong	12579.34	+190.00	+1.5	12579.34	10555.17
Frankfurt	3568.28	+39.50	+1.1	3568.28	2848.77

INTEREST RATES					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	Long Term
UK	6.97	6.97	7.09	8.24	7.16
US	5.82	6.12	6.67	6.83	6.89
Japan	0.47	0.81	2.42	—	—
Germany	3.06	3.31	5.72	6.57	6.57

CURRENCIES					
Index	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday
£/\$	1.6368	+1.56c	1.6025	£/DM	0.6110
£/¥	1.6375	+1.35c	1.5080	£/A\$	0.6107
DM/\$	1.2231	-0.89p	1.5273	DM/£	1.6375
¥/\$	160.246	-0.22p	157.3490	¥/£	124.410
£/A\$	1.006	+0.9	0.837	A\$/£	1.054

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday
Oil Brent	17.99	+0.18	19.17	RPI	155.4
Gold	342.75	+2.85	393.20	GDP	109.7
Gold E	209.42	-1.03	261.70	Base Rates	-6.25pc

سكدا من الاموال



## COMMENT

Yesterday's announcement was enough to take a full half-a-percentage point off long-term interest rates. If that's what surrendering half your job does for the economy, we'll have more of that please.

## The right move, without a shadow of a doubt

Gordon Brown's conversion to the cause of an independently determined monetary policy has been such a swift one that the rather eccentric approach he eventually adopts should come as no surprise. It wasn't so many years ago that the new Chancellor was against it altogether, though to be fair he has accepted for some little while now that Bank of England independence is "a good thing" in principle—an acceptance that found its expression in the curious hotch-potch of half-way house proposals he announced a couple of months back.

The speed of Mr Brown's passage from that unsatisfactory compromise position to the present full embrace has surprised everyone, not least because up until yesterday Mr Brown always insisted that the Bank would need to earn its independence. Is this, then, policy on the hoof, policy made in haste for the purpose of grabbing the headlines and establishing Mr Brown's credentials as a great reforming chancellor? Such a momentous change, once the principle of independence is accepted, surely demands a period of public consultation and consideration before deciding on the structure to carry it out?

It is not hard to pick holes in the detail of Mr Brown's plans. What is proposed is a peculiarly British approach to the problem. The Chancellor is like Tony Benn deciding on the future of nuclear power. He's gone for the made in Britain, advanced gas cooled reactor option, and the design faults are already obvious. Certainly what is proposed is sub-

stantly different to the existing great independent central banks of the world, the Federal Reserve Bank in the US and the Bundesbank in Germany. The most marked similarity is with the approach adopted in New Zealand, but should we really be looking to a country of only 3 million people to set our economic agenda?

The Government will continue to set the main parameters of policy—namely the inflation target and perhaps also a semi-official exchange rate target too. That is not the case in Germany and the US. Moreover, the Chancellor's approach is also distinguished by the mechanisms he has chosen for making monetary policy more accountable both to the Government and the country than it often is in other parts of the world.

The monetary committee that will decide on interest-rate policy will in practice be appointed entirely by the Chancellor. Four members are automatically appointed by him, the Governor and two deputy governors will eventually be appointed by him, and the two Bank of England career men will have to be approved by him. It can readily be seen that the scope for "cronyism" is quite marked. The same is true of the Court of the Bank of England where the Chancellor will be making four of his own people directors as soon as possible. The Court will then progressively be made to reflect the country's various regions and interest groups. Quite how "independent" the Bank will be by the end of this process is anyone's guess.

However, all these criticisms are nipping when set against the magnitude of the decision, which without a shadow of a doubt is the right one for any government, more so for an unproven Labour administration always likely to face an uphill struggle in establishing credibility with the markets. By tying his hands to an independent monetary policy, Mr Brown should be able to avoid those perennial financial crises that have bedevilled previous Labour governments, sapping them of their vitality and derailing their policies.

For John Redwood and Kenneth Clarke to say, as they did yesterday, that the new Chancellor is giving away most of his job is poppycock. Yesterday's announcement was enough of itself to take a full half-a-percentage-point off long-term interest rates, with the yield premium on British long bonds falling to within one-and-a-half points of their German equivalent for the first time in recent memory. If that's what surrendering half your job does for the economy, we'll have more of that please.

But let's not get too carried away in the euphoria of revolution. There is one obvious difficulty with the new arrangements, one quite clear area with potential for conflict—the strength of the pound. The more hawkish monetary policy likely to be advanced by an independent Bank only reinforces that strength, fighting against the economy's need and the Government's desire for a more acceptable exchange rate.

As things stand we risk returning to the dog days of the ERM, when a combination of high exchange rate and short-term interest rates perpetuated deep recession. Here the solution is in the Chancellor's hands, however. If he cools the economy with a rather tighter fiscal policy, then the Bank will be able to ease off on short-term interest rates and the pound will begin to fall back once more. The Chancellor has shown himself capable of bold and decisive action; let's hope he can follow it through in the rest of economic policy.

### Capital is music to Branson's ears

If Richard Branson's foray into railways proves anywhere near as lucrative as his stab at running a radio station, then the Virgin boss, or to be more precise the bewildering web of trusts that hold his assets, can look forward to becoming richer still.

The £87m that Capital Radio is coughing up for Virgin Radio must be music to Mr Branson's ears. The station was launched a mere four years ago with comparatively modest investment, and although it broke into profit last year and has done better this year, the latest figures show it losing market share in the all-important and overcrowded London radio market.

But this, above all else, is a marriage of convenience. Mr Branson's original plan was to float Virgin Radio even though history

shows us that he and stock market investors do not make happy bedfellows. By selling out in exchange for a 14 per cent stake in Capital Radio he has done the next best thing, gaining access to a quoted stock without the hassle of a listing.

For Capital, the deal provides access to the new digital radio age through the nationwide AM frequency on which Virgin broadcasts. If this is the future of radio, then Capital has bought itself a seat at the table at a reasonable price that brings the wherewithal and critical mass to make a go of it.

So far, so Smashy and Nicey. Where is the downside? First, Virgin has built its appeal and its advertising revenues playing contemporary rock. In order to satisfy the Radio Authority's requirement to protect both diversity and plurality, Capital intends to devote Virgin's FM licence in London to a much more specialised and narrower audience of male, hard rock fans.

Second, this is not a done deal. Although the merger will keep Capital safely beneath all the regulatory thresholds on market share, there is still a public interest test to pass and the authorities may conclude that Capital is just too big for its boots. The last time Capital applied for a new London FM licence, it was turned down. Third, Capital finds itself with a large minority shareholder on the books. Mr Branson is free to exit after two years. If by then digital radio is failing to live up to its billing, then both he and Capital could be the poorer.

## IN BRIEF

#### Investors seek Bre-X damages

A New York law firm has filed a law suit against Bre-X Minerals, the Canadian gold mining firm whose claims to have discovered the world's largest gold deposit have been exposed as a hoax. Wochler Harwood Halebian & Feller is seeking class action status to recover damages for shareholders hurt by the scandal. Bre-X shares plunged on resumption of trading in Canada yesterday, falling C\$3.16 to C\$0.07. Almost 40 million shares changed hands, forcing the exchange to suspend dealings for an hour to enable trading systems to cope with the volumes. Bre-X shares hit a high of C\$280 last autumn.

#### German unemployment up

Unemployment in Germany rose in April, casting further doubt on its ability to meet economic convergence criteria for the single European currency in 1999. Figures from the Federal Labour Office showed that unemployment rose by 8,000 to a seasonally adjusted 4,299,000. While politically sensitive unadjusted unemployment fell from 4,477,000 in March to 4,347,000 in April, giving a jobless rate of 11.5 per cent, economists called the figures disappointing. Hans Guenter Redeker at Chase Investments said: "The figures will put more pressure on the government, throwing their forecast for a 2.9 per cent [ratio of 1997 budget deficit to gross domestic product] yet further into question." Industry orders for March showed a greater-than-expected rise of 1.1 per cent compared with February. Domestic orders rose 0.7 per cent in March from February but were down 4.2 per cent from a year earlier.

#### BP warns Brown on taxes

British Petroleum warned the Government not make big changes to the business tax system. John Browne, chief executive, also made clear the group's opposition to any moves by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, to raise oil taxes in his July Budget. Mr Browne said: "We would not like the corporation tax system altered or rates to be adjusted. This would be bad in general and bad for us because this is our home country."

The comments came as BP announced record profits before tax and exceptional items of £755m for the first three months of the year, an increase of 19 per cent. Earnings from exploration and production surged by 24 per cent to £913m, while BP said there were signs that profit margins from refining and retailing were improving after last year's slump. The company also warned that it would need to spend at least \$100m (£62m) solving the millennium computer problem. Investment column, page 22.

#### Unilever to meet pensioners

Unilever, the Anglo Dutch consumer goods giant, attempted to diffuse a rebellion from some of its 44,000 pensioners over use of an £800m pension fund surplus. Niall Fitzgerald, chairman, told shareholders at the group's annual general meeting in London yesterday that he would meet pensioner representatives for talks on 19 May to try to sort out the grievances. They are unhappy that the company has used £260m of the surplus to declare a pensions holiday and cover future liabilities for fund members who took early retirement from the company.

#### Wace warns again on profits

Shares in Wace more than halved at one point yesterday after the printing services group shattered market expectations with its third profits warning in 12 months. The shares plunged 40p, before recovering to end 33.5p lower at 41p, on the announcement that the group would report operating losses both at the half-year and full-year stages in 1997.

The group said the improvement in its US businesses had not come through as expected, while a range of problems had hit European operations. The terms of a supply agreement with Hallmark, continued losses at an Irish plant, a reduction in demand for spirits labels and competition in the printing market were among the reasons cited for the difficulties. In March Wace revealed losses of £2.04m had replaced profits of £20.5m in 1996, but said it expected a recovery in the second half of 1997, which it now says will not be achieved.

#### Intel launches improved Pentium

Businesses were promised enhanced performance and speed as the world's leading personal computer makers helped Intel launch its latest chip, the Pentium II processor. The California-based company, which is said to have more than 80 per cent of the market for the components that power PCs, claims the product keeps it at the leading edge by combining innovative and proven technologies.

In particular, by incorporating the MMX multimedia technology it launched earlier this year it offers corporate customers the capability to use "visual computing" to convert raw data into rich 3D models in seconds. Computer makers, such as Hewlett-Packard, Dell, Compaq and Gateway 2000, will start shipping models equipped with the new technology this week, and it is anticipated that private consumers will be able to buy them by the end of the year.

#### T&N sale will help asbestos fund

T&N, the automotive components and engineering group, said it has sold the Ferodo Caernarfon clutch facing and industrial friction products business to American investors for £5m cash, which would be put into the fund which has been established in respect of future asbestos-related disease claims. In 1996, Ferodo Caernarfon recorded a pre-tax loss of £200,000 on sales of £9.6m.

#### Birmingham City warns on transfers

Birmingham City warned investors that it will make a loss in the full year if the club makes large player purchases, as it writes off transfer fees to profit and loss as incurred. The statement came as the AIM-listed club posted pre-tax profits of £2.7m for the six months to 28 February. The figure included a net profit of £1.4m on player transfers, principally the sale of Gary Breen to Coventry City. Birmingham said proceeds from the sale will be reinvested in new signings.



## 30 Specialist Practice Groups



## Offices in 9 Countries



## 150 Partners



## 1300 Staff

On May 1, as the country looked to its future, we were doing much the same.

By merging the two leading law firms Cameron Markby Hewitt and McKenna & Co into a new critical mass that instantly ranks as the 8th largest law firm in Europe.

The new firm is named Cameron McKenna and the "fit" has already been reported as being exceptionally good for clients.

From Day One Cameron McKenna is a major corporate and banking practice, and a leading City presence in property and litigation.

It also offers in one firm a market leader expertise in many of the world's most dynamic commercial sectors.

Including energy, insurance, biotechnology, healthcare and construction.

As well as major infrastructure projects, financial services regulation, and pensions.

In short, as flying starts go this one can already be said to have taken off.

Particularly for clients who prefer not to pay for learning curves.

For more information please call Robert Derry-Evans, Managing Partner on 0171-367 3000.

cameron mckenna

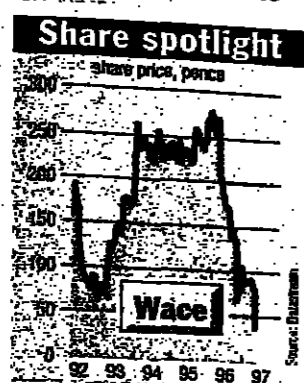
# Not bad for a first day





## market report / shares

Data Bank		
FTSE 100	4519.3	+63.7
FTSE 250	4520.2	+22.1
FTSE 350	2203.3	+27.0
SEAQ VOLUME	766.7m shares	
64,904 bargains		
Gifts Index	96.80	+2.15



## Banking on independence, Footsie scales new peaks

Taking Stock

## MARKET REPORT

## DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

Only two working days under Labour and Footsie has soared 74.3 points to a 4,519.3 peak. Yesterday's surge was spurred by the changes at the Bank of England which prompted gilts to prosper, a lower-than-expected interest rate increase and yet another rip-roaring performance in New York.

The dramatic thrust through 4,500 takes Footsie beyond the spring-time projections and close to some optimistic year-end forecasts.

Footsie has risen 93.4 points since John Major's election call, and, incredibly, has made progress in 14 of the last 15 sessions.

The level of independence given to the Bank sent government stocks romping ahead by approaching £5, their best display for years. The move to allow the Bank to set interest rates was viewed as helping to counter fears the Govern-

ment's big majority could lead it into spendthrift ways.

Many had expected the Chancellor Gordon Brown to opt for a debut half-percentage-point interest-rate increase. Although the bank is likely to lift rates again in the next few weeks the modest interim measure had been discounted.

Against such a background, further enhanced by encouraging company results and prospects, it would have been astonishing if shares had not responded. But there was talk blue chips had got ahead of the game.

New York's resolute advance, should it continue, would drive the stock market further ahead. But with sterling again moving forward and increasing the pressure on exporters and international groups, more interest-rate increases in the pipeline and Mr Brown set to lift taxes,



probably tinkering with ACT, some market men were decidedly jittery about the future direction of shares.

"The market has peaked; it is now a screaming sell," said a trader at one leading American investment house.

If he is right it could mean the advice advising investors to sell in May and buy again on St Leger Day will produce rich rewards this year.

The latest advance was, for once, not confined to blue chips. The supporting FTSE 250 index put on 22.1 points although it is still a considerable distance from its peak level.

Privatised companies were, in the main, in a more con-

dent mood than on Friday with most managing to attract plus signs. Railtrack, however, was slumped 12.5p backwards to 424p and BG, on the surface, suffered a 10.5p fall to 171p. But the shares had to contend with stripping out a 10.13p dividend payment.

Reed International, celebrating a \$30m five-year link with Microsoft, added 15.5p to 590p. Last night it met fund managers at a dinner, hosted by Henderson Crosthwaite at London's Savoy Hotel.

BT rose 6p to 267p, helped along by Credit Lyonnais Laing support. The investment house believes the shares are on a "significant" discount

to a sum-of-the-parts valuation and the group's new strategy will "reverse the share price underperformance of the last three years". Profits are expected to advance from £1.25bn to £1.33bn this year and then to £1.44bn.

Cobham, the engineer, firm to 631.5p following an analysts visit and British Steel shored off sterling's strength, improving to 148p on US support. BAT Industries, following the latest twist in the US tobacco litigation which powered Wall Street higher on Monday, gained a meagre 12.5p to 534p.

Yet another profits warning from Wace, the printer, sent the shares crashing 33.5p to 41p after 34.5p. Last year they were 27p.

British Petroleum produced better-than-expected first-quarter figures and, despite the declining crude price, gashed 29p to 732.5p. BSKyZ, nine-

month results today, gained 28.5p to 595.5p on expectation the figures will be accompanied by details of its digital television venture with Matsushita of Japan and BT Cable and Wireless put on 12.5p to 482p. There is talk it is at least near to completing a deal over its HongKong Telecom offshoot.

Financials were again strong with Barclays up 46.5p to a 1,191.5p and National Westminster up 23.5p to 751p.

Whitbread, on talk of non-core asset sales, gained 21.5p to 790p ahead of figures today. High flyer PizzaExpress came a little nearer earth, falling 12p to 652.5p as the US Janus Capital fund appeared to cut its stake from 16.9 per cent to 15.27 per cent.

Newcomer Salehurst, a paper supplier, traded at 124p from a 117p placing and on Ofex Energiser, the health food business, jumped 50p to 850p.

□Lopez, the advertising and marketing group, rose 2p to 39.5p, a 12-month high. Incepta, the advertising and public relations group headed by entrepreneur Bob Morton, has nearly 11 per cent and could be adding to its stake. In February the acquisitive group acquired Citigate, the financial PR business, in a reverse takeover.

□DPA-Egami, developing packaged electronic document management systems, is the latest to head for Ofex. It recently pulled in £450,000 through a private placing and its market debut will not produce new capital.

□Greenalls, the hotel and pub chain, should roll out interim profits this month of £63.6m against £57m, say Nikko, the Japanese securities house. It looks for £171.9m for the year.

## Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: 1 Ex rights 2 Ex dividend 3 Ex a u 4 United Shares Source: Reuters & Supplied by Parly Paid per Nil Paid Shares 3 AM Stock

## The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange Simply dial 0801 223 333, and when prompted to do so enter the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0801 223 333 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

Share	Code	Share	Code	Share	Code
FTSE 100 - Real-time	00	Stirling Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	36
UK Stock Market Report	01	Water Shares	37	Electricity Shares	40
UK Company News	02	High Street Banks	41		
Foreign Exchange	03				

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes	Market leaders: Top 20 values
ST 200000	ASDA Group 60000
BT 100000	ASDA Group 60000
BT 100000	ASDA Group 60000
BT 100000	ASDA Group 60000
BT 100000	ASDA Group 60000

FTSE 100 Index hour by hour	FTSE 100 Index hour by hour
Open 4501.45	11:00 4473.45 up 16.7
09:00 4485.50 up 30.2	12:00 4527.00 up 53.5
10:00 4476.20 up 20.6	13:00 4505.00 up 64.9

High/Low Stock	Price	Change	High/Low Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	60.00	+0.50	ASDA Group	60.00	+0.50
ASDA Group	60.00	+0.50	ASDA Group	60.00	+0.50
ASDA Group	60.00	+0.50	ASDA Group	60.00	+0.50

Telecommunications	Telecommunications
BT	267.00
BT	267.00
BT	267.00
BT	267.00

Retailers, Food	Retailers, Food
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Textiles & Apparel	Textiles & Apparel
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Tobacco	Tobacco
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Transport	Transport
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Water	Water
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Support Services	Support Services
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Recent Issues	Recent Issues
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Government Securities	Government Securities
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Mediums	Mediums
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Longs	Longs
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Shorts	Shorts
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

Undated	Undated
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00
ASDA Group	60.00

**Free banking night and day**

for 24 hour telephone banking

**0800 24 24 24**

For full written details of our services write to First Direct, Freepost, Leeds LS96 2HF. First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc. First Direct reserves the right to decline to open an account for you. Calls may be monitored and/or recorded. Applicants must be 18 or over. Free banking means that there are no charges for cheque and cash machine withdrawals in the UK, standing orders and direct debits. Switch payments or monthly statements.

Member HSBC Group











**Tiger Stransky**  
The Springbok view of the  
Pilkington Cup final, page 24

# sport

**Women can jump**  
Richard Taylor on a Briton in  
the new WNBA, page 27

## League clubs must change or 'go bust'

**Football**  
ANDREW MARTIN

Life outside the Premiership just gets harder. Yesterday Nationwide League clubs were bluntly informed that their futures could not be guaranteed unless they embraced radical plans for the wholesale overhaul of the three divisions below the elite.

The changes would see clubs currently in the Vauxhall Conference invited to join an enlarged League, split regionally at the lowest tier. Any opponents of the plan were told they risked sending the League into an abyss from which it would not return.

Strong words indeed, which came from Gerry Boon of the management consultants Deloitte Touche, commissioned in January to draft the independent report. Its findings, sent to all 72 League chairmen last week, will be debated at a special meeting, addressed by Boon, in London tomorrow.

The scale of the proposed changes is certain to provoke an outcry in some quarters, but Boon warned: "If these recommendations are not accepted I think that within a few years 20 clubs will have very serious financial problems and potentially go bust."

"There are already 20 clubs where the Inland Revenue could send in the liquidators, and more than 10 who need the

support of the Professional Footballers' Association to survive, while the vast majority are running at an operating loss.

"In simple terms, there is not a standstill option. The League either goes forwards into the future, or backwards."

The proposals are:

- The League will be "reinvigorated" by being expanded to include Vauxhall Conference clubs;
- The current First and Second Divisions will be unchanged, but the Third Division would be regionalised, with clubs run on a part-time basis allowed to join;
- Promotion and relegation issues would be extended to ensure fewer "meaningless" games;
- Play-offs for both promotion and relegation. Up to five clubs could move each way from divisions within the League;
- The Coca-Cola Cup would be given an extra two-legged first round to accommodate the increased number of League members;
- First Division and Premiership clubs would be allowed a phased entry from the third-round stage, with all ties from that point settled on the night. There would be no replays;
- A commercially qualified chief executive would be appointed to head the new-look League, with an independent chairman and commercial director;
- The organisation and ad-

ministration of the League would be located under one roof, with the traditional headquarters in Lytham St Annes abandoned and the League offices centralised in London;

- Restructuring of the League itself, to turn it from an administration-led organisation into a market-led body; and
- Ensuring the League operates as a professional representative body, acting for the long-term good of professional football and not narrowly for the sole benefit of current member clubs.

Hereford, the relegated Third Division club that would benefit from such a bold restructuring, have persuaded Graham Turner to withdraw his offer to resign. Turner, the club's director of football, had offered to stand down following Hereford's demotion to the GM Vauxhall Conference on Saturday.

One League club currently undergoing an internal review is Shrewsbury Town, who have dismissed their manager, Fred Davies, following the club's relegation to the Third Division. Davies, at 57 the League's oldest manager, steered the Gay Meadow club to the Third Division title in his first season in charge and last year took them to Wembley for the first time in the Auto Windscreens Shield. However, a decline this term - with one win in their last 16 games - turned initial play-off hopes into relegation from Division Two.

Happier news for Mick Jones. The Plymouth caretaker manager has been given the job on a permanent basis. Jones has been in charge since Neil Warnock, now managing Oldham, was dismissed by Argyle in February.

Sheffield Wednesday confirmed that the Monaco defender Patrick Blondeau has arrived at Hillsborough to undergo a medical. The 29-year-old French international has agreed a three-year contract and Wednesday hope to finalise a deal, believed to be worth £1.8m, providing he passes his medical. Blondeau will not be paraded as a Wednesday player until the end of the season because Monaco, the newly crowned French champions, still have two games remaining.

Paul Peschisolidi has threatened to quit West Bromwich Albion, claiming the club have reneged on a promised wage review. The Canadian striker, now on the transfer list, said he agreed to a wage cut when moving from Birmingham on condition the situation would be reviewed at the end of this season.

Billy Stark, Celtic's assistant manager, will stay at Parkhead until 18 May before stepping down.

## Ravanelli still hopes to be fit for final

TOMMY STANFORTH

Bryan Robson is hopeful that Fabrizio Ravanelli will be fit to play for Middlesbrough in the FA Cup final against Chelsea on Saturday week.

The Italian international striker had a scan yesterday to establish the extent of the hamstring injury he suffered during Monday's 3-3 draw against Manchester United at Old Trafford. Robson, Middlesbrough's manager, revealed the injury was not as serious as first feared. "It's not snapped," he said. "It's not as bad as we first thought and, hopefully, we can get him fit for Wembley."

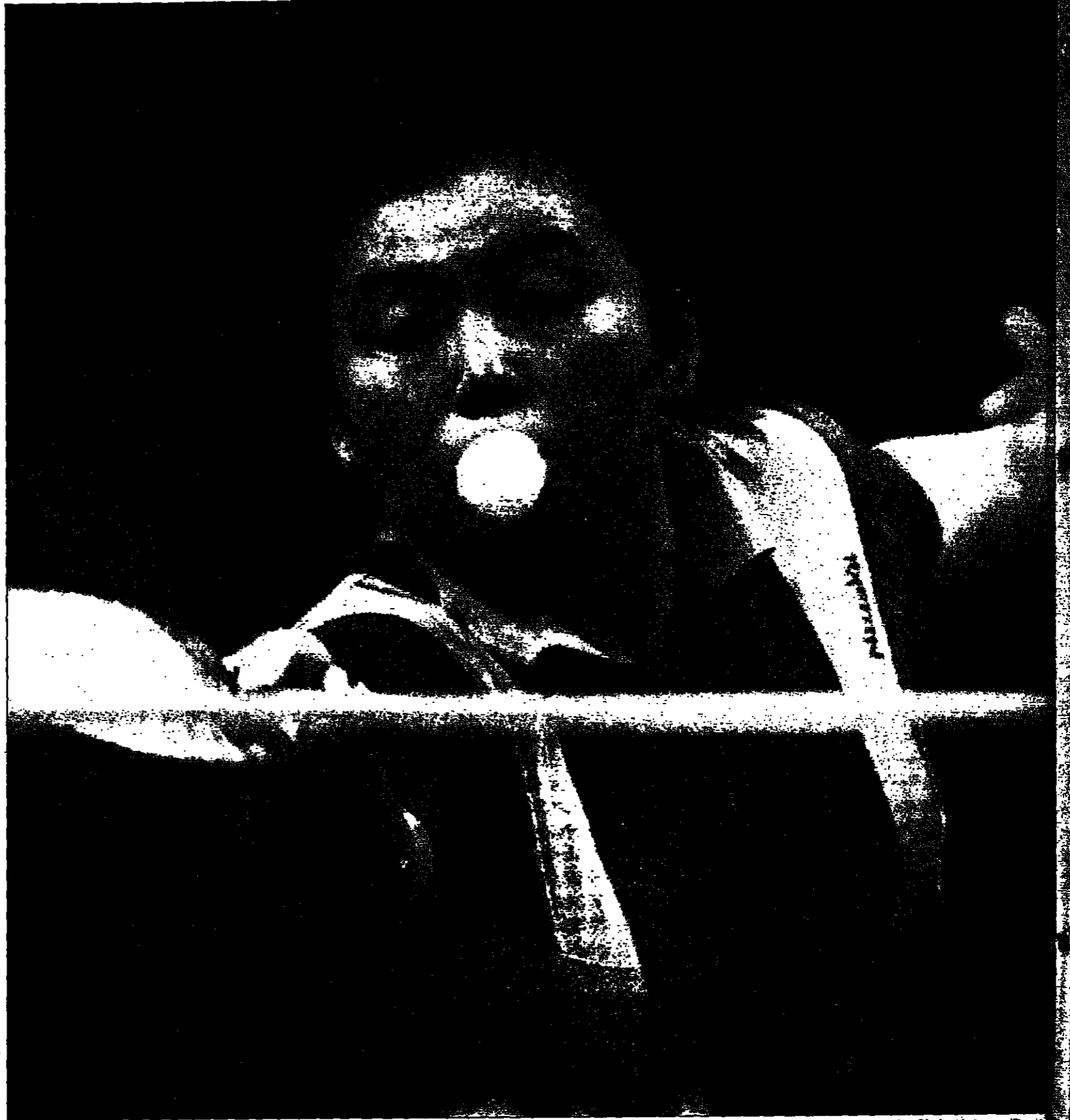
Ravanelli said: "I was worried when I went to hospital for a scan. I do not know the results of the tests, but I would put my chances of playing at Wembley as 50-50. We will have to wait and see. I will not be fit, though, for our final two Premiership matches."

Jürgen Klinsmann's return to English football is far from cer-

tain despite reports that he is set to rejoin Tottenham at the end of the season, sources close to the player said yesterday. The German international captain, who has decided to leave Bayern Munich at the end of the season because he is unhappy with the way he has been treated at the club, has had offers to play in Spain, Italy and Turkey as well as England.

Aston Villa will be forced to sell their Serbian midfielder Sasa Curcic to a foreign club if they fail to obtain a new work permit for their £4m record signing. Curcic has not been selected for the number of first-team matches required to guarantee another permit.

Liverpool's Robbie Fowler faces a Football Association misconduct charge after being sent off, along with Everton's David Unsworth, for fighting in the Merseyside derby on 16 April. Fowler appeared to lash out at Unsworth as the pair were leaving the pitch - hence the FA charge, which is likely to lead to a fine.



Deng Yaping on her way to victory over Wang Nan in the women's singles final at the World Championships

Photograph: Chris Heigren/Reuters

## Waldner shines amid the chaos

Table Tennis

Jan-Ove Waldner gave the World Championships a lustre it hardly deserved yesterday with his stirring triumph over the young Belarusian Vladimir Samsonov in the men's singles final.

His achievement also banished to the background, the organisational problems that had made the tournament a night-

mare for the players and media. If only the championships had run as smoothly as Waldner's easy progression to the title. Sadly, it was chaos.

A record 116 countries playing 6,000 matches on 42 tables - the most countries, the most players, the most matches, and the largest collection of results.

The 44th championships was the biggest, but they were far from being the best.

For a start, a new system for second-round group matches in the team event was so complicated no one could understand it. It produced a scheduling nightmare with teams not knowing who and where they were playing two hours before the match.

The public were also affected. Some who had bought seats in the main G-Mex arena found them occupied by players.

Consequently, all players and officials were banned from occupying the spectators' stands and those refused included Xu Yinsheng, the Chinese president of the International Table Tennis Federation.

A players' strike was then threatened unless the ban was rescinded and the organisers were forced into a swift U-turn to allow them to occupy unserved seats.

The media suffered when computerised results systems failed to work which meant results often arrived more than two hours after the match was over - or never at all.

Even before the competition was completed, an inquiry was underway with ITTF executive vice-president, Yap Yih of Malaysia, placing some of the fault on the shoulders of his own governing body.

## Cow crash puts paid to Makinen

Rallying

Carlos Sainz of Spain and the Frenchman François Delecour were in joint first place in the Tour of Corsica rally after yesterday's second day saw the hopes of the Finnish world champion, Tommi Makinen, ruined.

Sainz, in a four-wheel drive Ford Escort, and Delecour, in a lightweight two-wheel drive Peugeot 306, had exactly the same time after the day's six timed stages in changing conditions with occasional downpours.

Gilles Panizzi of France, the overnight leader, was third, nine seconds back in the second

Peugeot, while Britain's Colin McRae was fourth, a further 10 seconds behind and also still in contention for victory today.

McRae lost time in the morning because of a wrong choice of tyres but then recovered superbly, clocking the best time in four tests in his Subaru Impreza.

Makinen, who had started the day sixth, had to pull out after bumping into a cow with his Mitsubishi Lancer halfway through the day's first test, the longest of this year's rally, over 48.9 kilometres from Vero to L'Amone.

Both Makinen and his co-driver, Seppo Harjanne, escaped injury, but the car was destroyed and they were unable to restart.

Yesterday's gruelling first section on twisting asphalt roads north of Ajaccio went to Sainz, who gained 46 seconds on Panizzi. Delecour was second fastest, 10 seconds slower than Sainz, while Panizzi slipped to third. "I made the wrong choice of tyres," Panizzi said.

Sainz, who was four seconds behind Delecour after L'Amone, was slightly faster than the Frenchman in three of the next four stretches despite electrical problems. "The windshield wipers stopped working at one point while it was pouring and the horn blew by itself for some reason, but apart from that everything was fine," Sainz said.

## Banks returns to the basics

MATT TENCH

Tony Banks was quick to demonstrate yesterday that his appointment to high office had done nothing to dull the instincts of a true football fan.

Asked what he thought of the facilities at Wembley Stadium, the new Minister for Sport replied: "Crap."

At an impromptu press conference in his new office, Banks gave every indication that he would be a Sports Minister like none of his predecessors, refusing to allow his elevation to curb his capacity for plain speaking.

"We've got wonderful facilities being developed at club level, but crap facilities at national level," he said. "The facilities at Wembley are appalling. I feel ashamed to think Wembley is our national stadium and I think something has to be done about it."

Presumably by himself,

though Wembley, which was confirmed as football's national stadium last December, may ask the minister to reconsider his verdict after its £210m overhaul. Work is due to begin next year, with a completion date tentatively set for 2000.

Banks succeeded John Major as the nation's most powerful Chelsea fan, and was already intending to sample Wembley's delights on Saturday week at the Cup final. As Minister of Sport he can now go every year.

Yesterday's press conference was dominated by questions about football. On the issue of a possible return to terraces, Banks said: "I don't think we can go back. I wonder what demand there is for standing areas now. I think we've moved on."

However, Banks was worried about the effects that the high cost of tickets would have on the game in the long term, expressing particular concern that

the unemployed could no longer afford to attend matches in the Premiership.

Banks also spoke yesterday about the danger of Sky becoming too dominant in the televising of football. "Sky has been great in terms of the presentation of football, for instance, but of course they can do that with a dedicated sports channel."

"The money they put into football is also great, but I'm still worried looking down the road about what might happen if more and more sports are covered by one of the suppliers and they end up charging more and more."

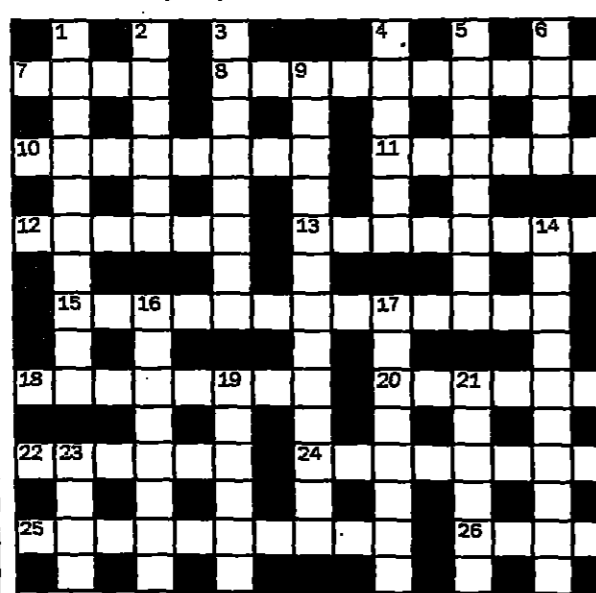
Banks is committed to helping the Football Association try to secure the rights to host the 2006 World Cup in England. He cheerfully admitted to not being very clear how he would go about this, but acknowledged the strength of the German opposition. "We're going to have a bit of a fight there," he said.

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3292. Wednesday 7 May

By Aquila

Yesterday's Solution



**ACROSS**  
7 River erosion (4)  
8 Considered French composer, not having succeeded with scale ... (10)  
10 ... and a painter compatriot failing to open bottom drawer (8)  
11 Black Beauty for example - English horse, male (6)  
12 A horse trained on dry land (6)  
13 Where to rest a bowler when taken off? (8)  
15 Elector who is uncommitted, averting lot of trouble (8-5)  
18 Lorries getting punctures around base (8)  
20 Farm butter, double

**DOWN**  
1 Rules for me changed, being contrite (10)  
2 Quick passage from that part of city before noon (6)  
3 Fan sticking (8)  
4 To protest is the thing! (6)  
5 Tony's act in reading that keeps temperature low (8)

**6** The diminutive Elizabeth is topless for the painter (4)  
**9** Joke-shop supplies in a shocking glut, to be sorted out (8-5)  
**14** People bringing up issue of Di's surname, perhaps? (10)  
**16** Dismissed, prone to be a long way from home (8)  
**17** Loaf to deteriorate? (8)  
**19** Is pale, trembling, but making out (6)  
**21** A tendency to be off-course (6)  
**23** The game is up for this kink (4)

Published by Newspaper Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford.  
Back issues available from Historic Newspapers, 01988 840370.  
Wales: 01988 840370.  
Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office.



## FRENCH OR GERMAN

Do you want to improve your French or German for career, pleasure or both?

### DIPLOMA IN FRENCH OR GERMAN

The Open University's Centre for Modern Languages offers courses to help you enhance your knowledge of the language and culture of France or Germany leading to the award of a diploma. All you need is a basic knowledge of the language you want to study.

### OU SUPPORTED OPEN LEARNING

Our proven method of learning allows you to study wherever you live and in your own time. You will be using specially written course books, study guides and audio visual materials, backed up by personal tutorial and counselling support.

### STUDY PACKS

The courses are also available as packs, enabling you to study on your own without registering as a student. Please complete the coupon or ring the OU hotline today for a brochure giving complete course details.

Complete and send this coupon to:  
The Open University, PO Box 625 Milton Keynes MK1 1TY.  
Please send me details of your (please tick)

☐ French language courses ☐ German language courses

☐ Study Packs

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

To save time call the hotline 01908 376554

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION & TRAINING OPEN TO ALL ADULTS